WASHINGTON COLLEGE REVIEW

A Liberal Arts Journal

WASHINGTON COLLEGE
300 Washington Avenue
Chestertown, MD 21620

December 5, 1996

Dear Washington College Faculty Member:

Here is your copy of the *Washington College Review*. This year's edition features scholarly articles and creative writing by our students. We hope you enjoy it.

But we hope as well that you'll encourage some of your students to submit their work for next year's *Washington College Review*. The deadline is Monday, February 3rd, and the editors are Ed Buscaglia for Social Sciences, George Shivers for Humanities, Kevin McKillop for Natural Sciences, and Kathy Wagner for Creative Writing. The Student Editor is Natalie Smith.

Amzie Parcell, Editor
Robert Day, Publisher

WASHINGTON COLLEGE REVIEW

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Washington College
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The Washington College Review *is a liberal arts journal that seeks to recognize the best of undergraduate student writing from all disciplines of the College and to publish work deserving of wider availability to readers in the college community and beyond. The* Washington College Review *is published annually by the Literary House Press of Washington College.*

Information for Contributors

The *Washington College Review* accepts submissions from WC undergraduates of essays, fiction, and poetry. Submissions may deal with subject matter from any discipline taught at Washington College and in any of the foreign languages taught at Washington College. Manuscripts should not exceed twelve pages in length.

Interested students should contact one of the editors for volume V for the application form to submit a manuscript: Amzie Parcell, General Editor; Natalie Smith, Student Editor; Edgardo Buscaglia, Social Science Editor; Kevin McKillop, Natural Science Editor; or Katherine Wagner, Creative Writing Editor. All manuscript submissions should include a cover letter and the completed form.

Manuscripts should be prepared according to the *Chicago Manual of Style* (14th edition, University of Chicago Press) or *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (5th edition, University of Chicago Press) by Kate L. Turabian.

Manuscripts should be double-spaced. Notes should be numbered in sequence throughout the manuscript, then gathered together and typed at the end of the text and labeled End Notes. Works Cited or Sources Cited should be listed alphabetically after the End Notes.

Upon acceptance, authors will be asked for an electronic version of their manuscript.

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STUDENT PUBLISHING: THE EDITOR'S NOTE

Student work on the *Washington College Review* is not limited to writers. There is always a student editor. Kristen Keener was our editor this year. She recruited manuscripts and evaluated them with a sharp eye to content and style. This is the second year that Kristin Callahan '96 has designed the *Review*'s text as our Production Assistant. Her meticulous work and aesthetic sense result in fine issues.

Of course we have very good student writers also! The poets we've published here have also been actively disseminating their work on campus in student publications. Jennifer Waldych was awarded the prestigious Sophie Kerr Literary Prize in May 1996. Some of the research articles are the product of internships by Washington College students at the U.S. Embassy in Ireland and and with the Maryland Department of Human Resources in the Homeless Services Program. The other essays reveal students' interests in diverse issues of gender studies, linguistics, medieval studies, and European literature.

Poets, researchers, editors, production assistants — we on the Board of the *WCR* congratulate all of you and are proud of your work. On behalf of the Board, we also express our deep appreciation to all those faculty and staff members who encouraged and advised students in their writing and research, especially Emilie Amt, Thomas Cousineau, George R. Shivers, and Gail Tubbs.

Jeanette E. Sherbondy
Editor

HOMELESS WOMEN: REASONS AND OBSTACLES

BY RACHEL ROLL

Homeless Women

> *People need to open their eyes and hearts. Being homeless isn't something you like happening to you, but it does happen. I just don't think doors should be slammed in our faces.*
>
> — P.J., a homeless mother [1]

Over the last decade, social workers and social scientists have noticed an alarming trend in the demographics of the homeless population. Although analyzing the homeless population has always been a difficult task for researchers because of the mobility of the population, there has been a noticeable increase in the numbers of homeless women. In 1958, it was determined that only 3 percent of the skid row population was female; thirty years later, between 25 and 30 percent of the homeless population is made up of women.[2] Alarmingly, many of these women are not alone — a large percentage of the new wave of homeless women is accompanied by their children. In this paper, I will examine some of the factors that contribute to the growing number of homeless women.

This paper grew out of my own experience and what I learned through my work with the Maryland Homeless Services Program (HSP) and providers. In the summer of 1995, I had the opportunity to intern for the Maryland Department of Human Resources in the Homeless Services Program. I studied the

effects of Maryland's welfare reform, served as a liaison between homeless advocacy groups and HSP, and helped apply for federal funding from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in a program in which the state of Maryland was the first and only state to apply as a unified block. HSP serves only as an administrative body that oversees the application of the state's policies toward homeless people, but I met and worked with providers and advocates through meetings of the Governor's Advisory Board on Homelessness (GABH), the Welfare Advocates Group, and through my work as liaison.

Feminization of Poverty and Other Factors

> *Structural inequalities along lines of gender in large measure determine women's experience.*
>
> —Ellen L. Bassuk [3]

Many authors have attributed the rise in the numbers of homeless women to the increase in the numbers of women living in poverty on the margins of society. The so-called "feminization of poverty" is considered to be a major cause of the increase in the numbers of homeless women and children. With the "feminization of poverty," more and more of the people living under the poverty line in modern America are women, usually with dependent children. In fact, over the last decade women and their dependents have become the major demographic group living in poverty in America.[4]

This phenomena of poor women has been traced to an unprecedented increase in the number of female-headed families. In the less than thirty years from 1959 to 1987, the number of families headed by women with children under the age of 18 more than doubled. In 1950, there were 2,544,000 female-headed families, or 9.4 percent of the family population. By 1987, the number of female-headed families had increased to 7,151,000 — approximately 21 percent of the family population.[5] Many

factors have contributed to this increase. Among younger women, the increase has been traced to two primary factors, both of which result from a change in the traditional roles and expectations for women which occurred through the women's liberation movement. More women are choosing to leave abusive or unsatisfying marriages, often receiving custody of the children. An increase in the career opportunities available to women made this option more viable for many women, as more women were able to break into the higher-paying professions.

However, not all female-headed families are so fortunate. The greatest increase in the female-headed households has occurred below the poverty level, not in those socioeconomic levels where women are earning greater wages that enable them to better support a family on their own. The numbers of poor women-headed families has been rapidly increasing. In 1960, 27 percent of all poor people lived in households headed by a woman; by 1987, that number had increased to 52 percent.[6] The circumstances that surround these women and their families are quite different from the upper-middle-class ideal of a single-woman-headed family.

Because of many coinciding socioeconomic factors, many single women and their children are pushed closer and closer to the economic margins of society. The primary non-source of income for these women is often absentee fathers. Failure of the child-support system has made the lives of many single mothers next to impossible. In 1985, only 61 percent of all women with minor children of an absent father were awarded child support, but only half of these women ever received any money. Women who live beneath the poverty level were even worse off: 40 percent of these women were awarded support. Only 21 percent ever received any payments. The average yearly amount poor women received was $1,383.[7]

Another important element in the growing numbers of women and their families who are living on the margins of society is the earning power of a woman in today's society. On

the average, working single mothers earn only one-third of the amount married couple families earn.[8] The 1989 median income for single working mothers was 64 percent below the official poverty level for a family of two.[9]

Unfortunately, many single mothers are in no position to apply for jobs with better wages. More and more single mothers are younger. This often means that their educations are disrupted, if not completely terminated, by their pregnancies. Single mothers who already come from a background of poverty are less likely to have received a quality of education that lends itself to college degrees, which provide access to higher-paying jobs.

But even beyond educational handicaps, other factors keep a single mother and her family on the economic edges, pushing her and her family toward homelessness. Perhaps the most influential cause in the increase in the numbers of homeless people — both male and female — is the lack of affordable housing. In less than one decade, the median rent for nonsubsidized low-income housing increased from $225 to $360 a month. During the same period, the number of people in need of low-rent housing almost doubled.[10] Simultaneously, the number of low-rental properties available decreased dramatically, due to a plethora of "urban renewal" policies which encouraged gentrification and conversion to condominiums. These trends, supported by city governments, displaced low-income renters in exchange for higher-income yuppies or businesses. In many cases, the housing units that were eliminated by the gentrification process were not replaced, leaving many people in a desperate search for affordable housing which was almost completely unavailable.

The dissolution of traditional social supports has also led to the increase in the number of homeless women.[11] In past times, a displaced woman in need had a social network which would support her while she found a way to regain her self-sufficiency. Today the traditional community support system has virtually collapsed due to poverty, violence, drugs, and the housing shortage, leaving many women stranded when they face financial difficulty.[12]

The support a woman can find from her family often makes the difference between homelessness and mere poverty, but it is a tenuous foothold. The couch or basement of a friend or family member is still the last step before homelessness for many people today. A study of homeless mothers in Massachusetts shelters in 1986 discovered that almost 85 percent of the women had stayed with a friend or family member for a period before entering the shelter.[13] However, the added economic burden of another mouth to feed and the added stress of another person in what is most likely an already overcrowded living space on the economic margins, makes the people living on sofas in the homes of friends and family the most vulnerable population. If the host family or individual experiences an increase in economic difficulties, such as an illness in the family, hostile landlords, or loss of a job, or if there is a personality conflict between the host and the guest, the guest is usually the first excess expense to be eliminated.

This phenomenon is recognized by homeless providers. When the state of Maryland eliminated its Disability Assistance and Loan Program (DALP) in the summer of 1995, its cash assistance program to the temporarily disabled, homeless providers feared that the lack of cash income would lead to an increase in the numbers of homeless people. As people no longer were able to help contribute towards the expenses of the household, many were kicked out. One month after the program had been discontinued, homeless providers in Baltimore reported that they personally encountered ten people who were now seeking help from shelters and soup kitchens, and they were certain that there were more dislocated people whom they had not encountered.

AFDC (Aid To Families With Dependent Children)

> *An ex-boyfriend used to say that observing my struggle was a little like watching someone standing in a room, with arms upraised to prevent the ceiling from pressing in on her.*
>
> —Rita Henley Jensen, former AFDC mother, on living on AFDC[14]

Eventually, lack of other resources can drive poor women to enroll in public assistance programs, such as Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC). Women and their dependent children compose over 80 percent of the recipients of AFDC, and are the largest demographic group receiving any kind of welfare.[15] However, this assistance does not guarantee these women and their families any kind of security while they receive these benefits.[16] Half of all homeless mothers are still receiving AFDC benefits, but are unable to provide for themselves or their families with this assistance.[17]

Although women and children are considered to be the "deserving poor," there is a reluctance on the part of American poverty policymakers to make public assistance too "appealing" to poor women. Numerous restrictions are placed on AFDC recipients, intended to prevent the poor from living too comfortably at the taxpayers' expense. These hoops through which poor women must jump in order to receive subsistence benefits are perhaps subconsciously intended by the policymakers to inspire the AFDC recipient to exert herself to self-sufficiency so she is no longer demeaned by the welfare system. Instead, the restrictions make it even more difficult for a woman on AFDC to raise herself to a level of economic sufficiency that allows her to support herself and her children by herself.

Single women must remain single to receive assistance from the government through AFDC.[18] AFDC also hinders families because while on AFDC rolls, a woman may not be employed. If she does work, and her employment is discovered, then she and her children face a loss of their benefits. There are few, if any, supportive services available to a single mother trying to work while receiving AFDC — no child care for work hours, little job training, fewer educational opportunities. The few "job training" programs that the government does make available to AFDC mothers do not consider college degrees to be a necessary element of "training," thereby condemning these women to the low-paying jobs that are available to non-college graduates.[19]

Welfare mothers are also at greater risk of being charged with child neglect. Rita Henley Jensen, a former AFDC recipient, writes

> It is widely understood that any neighbor can call the authorities about a welfare mother, making a charge of neglect, and that mother, since she is less than nothing, might not be able to prove her competency. I had a close call once. I had been hospitalized for ten days and a friend took care of my children. After my return home, however, I was still weak. I would doze off on the sofa while the kids were awake — one time it happened when they were outside playing on the sidewalk. A neighbor, seeing them unattended, immediately called the child welfare agency, which sent someone out to question me and to look inside the refrigerator to see if I had any food. Luckily, that day I did.[20]

The irony of these regulations is that the amounts that are doled out to AFDC recipients are barely enough to justify the stringent rules around which these women and their families must structure their lives. Although the amount of AFDC payments varies widely from state to state, it is almost uniformly too little to keep a woman and her family above the poverty line. In Massachusetts, a family of three can receive a maximum of $539 monthly from AFDC, accompanied by an average in $193 in food stamps, a rental subsidy of $40 for "private housing," and free medical care through Medicaid. However, the family receiving all of these possible benefits — which is not guaranteed — would still be trying to live on a total income that was approximately 80–90 percent below the official federal poverty level of $11,570 per year — and the benefits given by Massachusetts are considered to be the most generous in the nation.[21]

Homelessness and Women

I walk the streets. Twelve hours and fifteen minutes a day, every day,
I walk the streets. Is that what I got sober for? To walk the streets?
—Betty, a homeless woman [22]

Many of the frustrations and difficulties faced by homeless women are gender-blind. These problems include the difficulty of finding shelter and food, poor health, and employment or lack thereof. A survey asked residents of homeless shelters in Maryland — both male and female — what services they felt that they needed to overcome their problems. Both sexes listed affordable housing and assistance in finding housing, transportation, help finding jobs, social service benefits, food, medical services, job training, educational services, service coordination, budget counseling, and child care.[23]

Homeless women tend to have more difficulty finding shelter than men. Until the last decade, there were far fewer shelters for women than there were for men. It wasn't until shelter providers began to realize the drastic increase in the number of homeless women — especially those with children — that the number of shelters for women increased. However, most of the new shelters that serve women tend to focus on women with children or homeless families.[24] There are very few shelters that serve single homeless women, which may partially account for the low numbers of homeless single women counted.

Even if women do manage to find shelter, they still face difficulties and discomfort. Entrance procedures are usually stringent and invasive. In some New York shelters, the entrance procedure includes a delousing shower, an inventory of all belongings, evidence of psychiatric clearance, and sometimes even a gynecological examination, all of which are mandatory procedures.[25] One of the most common complaints homeless women have about shelters is the lack of privacy, both in the sleeping conditions and in the questions that they must answer before being admitted.[26] Some shelters provide meals, but many

do not, which means women must try to find food at other locations. Some shelters are unsafe, and women fear violence and theft from both other residents and shelter staff. At many shelters, especially those in affluent neighborhoods, the women must leave the shelter at extremely early times, so that the neighborhood is not contaminated by the presence of "undesirables," leaving homeless women to search for somewhere to go and something to do to fill the hours until the shelter opens again for the night.[27]

Faced with a shortage of available shelter, many homeless women turn to other resources to keep them fed or off the streets, including prostitution. A 1974 report found that many homeless women "traded sexual favors for food, shelter, and other necessities."[28] Marilyn, a homeless woman in San Antonio, Texas, told researchers:

> A lot of girls are going into doing what they have to do to get a place where they can spend the night. That's why a lot of these girls are hanging out in bars, just to do what they can do to get a place to shower or sleep.... They do it even though they don't want to just cause they got to get off the streets. They stay at a bar in the daytime while the guy goes to work, and then they get a motel room. That's what Debby's doing. And there's Carol. And there's JoAnne, who's living back there in the alley with five or six guys. It doesn't look right for her to be living with them, but that's the only way she can survive.[29]

The health of all homeless people is generally poor, regardless of sex. Degenerative or chronic conditions are usually aggravated by the conditions under which homeless people live.[30] Contagious conditions spread like wildfire among the sheltered population: Abigail, a homeless woman in Washington, D.C., said, "If one of us gets sick, we all get sick."[31] Homeless women commonly suffer from ailments that result from exposure to

weather and from having to spend an excessive amount of time on their feet, such as allergies, swollen legs, back pain, chronic coughs, colds, rashes, shortness of breath, and sore throats. A study published by the American Medical Association discovered that in in an examination of seventy-five sheltered homeless women in Baltimore, two-thirds had gynecological problems and more than half were missing teeth. Health problems like obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease that result from poor or inadequate diet were also common.[32] Pregnant women face difficulty in finding prenatal care, which often results in underweight babies. Because of their constant concern about how to care for their children, homeless mothers tend to neglect their own health. They also often tend to suffer from stress-related illnesses more often than single homeless women.[33]

There are innate difficulties in medical treatment. All homeless people have difficulty gaining access to quality health care. The transience of their state makes it difficult to keep seeing the same doctor, if they can find one that accepts Medicaid. Even simple prescriptions are a challenge. If a doctor prescribes bed rest, there is little or no opportunity for a homeless person to follow that prescription, for lack of a bed in which to stay. Special diets for people with diabetes or heart conditions are usually unavailable in soup kitchens or shelters.

Homeless women often are accompanied by their children, which makes them vulnerable to difficulties that single women and men do not experience. Besides caring for the health of their offspring, homeless mothers have the additional worry of their children's education. Since most emergency shelters only allow a family to stay for as little as two weeks, a family rarely is able to stay in the same neighborhood, which would enable children to keep attending the same school.[34] Getting the children to a school that is across town on time can be a formidable feat, especially if a mother must rely solely on public transportation. Sometimes the frequency with which children must change

schools can keep them out of school for the entire period of the family's homelessness. One homeless woman, who signed herself "At Peace," wrote of her experience:

> But through it all I still felt good about one thing. That was that I managed to keep my son at the school he's been attending for the last four years, and his attendance didn't drop.[35]

Because of the problems of caring for children on the street or in a shelter, mothers often place their children in the homes of family members or friends when they become homeless. This gives the children a healthier, more stable existence. However, the separation is often very emotionally difficult for all members of the family.

Ironically, the lack of children can make homelessness an even more difficult experience for a woman. There are fewer shelters for single women than there are for mothers with their children — 50 percent of all shelter beds in the state of Maryland are designated for families, and only one-fifth of all beds statewide are earmarked for single women. Without children, a woman qualifies for fewer public assistance programs, such as AFDC. After the state of Maryland's DALP program was discontinued, homeless providers reported that homeless women who had received DALP, but were now ineligible for the replacement program, were collecting their children from the homes of friends and relatives in order to qualify for AFDC. "People will do anything to survive," providers commented.

Women who are homeless are more vulnerable to violence than housed women. One study of a sample of 141 sheltered homeless women in New York found that homeless women are 106 times more likely to be raped, 41 times more likely to be robbed, and 15 times more likely to be assaulted than housed women of the same socioeconomic and racial categories.[36] Vio-

lence on the street is growing, as a person sleeping alone on the street is the prey of not only other homeless people, but of police and "upstanding" citizens. Less than ten years ago, a homeless man was set on fire by teenagers as he tried to find a place to sleep. All homeless people, regardless of sex, fear incidents such as this. Even in the shelters, there is fear of violence. It is said by homeless people that among the one thousand people a night who stay at the Community for Creative Non-Violence (CCNV) shelter, five hundred are homeless, the rest are there to "prey on the homeless." This shelter is considered by homeless people to be the most dangerous shelter in Washington, D.C., and some people would sooner take their chances sleeping on the streets than spend the night at CCNV.[37]

One difficulty faced by homeless women is that of finding a way out of homelessness. A job is acknowledged by homeless women to be the best way off the streets.[38] However, several barriers face homeless women who seek a job or who try to work while homeless. The greatest of these is discrimination. Employers are unwilling to hire a homeless person, usually because of prejudice. Potential employers are reluctant to hire and unable to reach an applicant who does not have a daytime phone number, as most homeless women do not. One homeless woman protested the way one shelter answered the telephone, "Mainline Church Day Shelter for Women." She said that she

> could never get a job so long as shelter staff answered the phone that way…Everybody knows that homeless women are prostitutes or alcoholics coming off a toot.[39]

Many homeless women have been discriminated against because of their lack of housing. One woman tells about how an employment agency for which she had worked for nine years no longer offered her jobs once it was discovered that she was homeless. Another woman was fired from her position as a receptionist when her employer discovered she lived in a shelter

— she was told, "If I had known you lived in a shelter, I never would have hired you."[40]

Besides discrimination, other factors keep homeless women from working their way out of homelessness. Living in a shelter out of bags and suitcases makes it difficult to maintain the standards of appearance necessary for higher-paying jobs, such as receptionist or secretary. If a woman does not own her own car, she must rely on public transportation to get to her job. This makes finding a job in the suburbs, where there are usually more and better employment opportunities, next to impossible. These elements tend to funnel homeless women into menial jobs that pay only minimum wages. These jobs rarely provide health insurance, or even enough money to rent an apartment.[41] The path out of homelessness is not an easy one to climb.

Conclusion

I guess a lot of greed is in the world. If there were more people like me, maybe — just maybe — they'll stop being so selfish.
— L.T., a homeless person [42]

The reasons for the increasing numbers of homeless women are varied, but frightening. In our society, a number of structural flaws in our economy and society are pushing more women and children into the margins. Government measures to prevent women and children from having nowhere else to live but the sidewalks are woefully inadequate. The greatest obstacle facing homeless people of all sexes, and those people who try to provide some services for them, is a growing discrimination and antagonism against the "lazy" and the "worthless" homeless people. These discriminatory attitudes are preventing homeless people from finding jobs that can help keep them out of homelessness permanently, and are cutting back and eliminating the programs designed to help people when they are most in need of aid.

Private providers cannot take up the slack which the government no longer helps with, regardless of what the "reformers" say. In these cruel and unkind times, one can only wonder what the "great society" has come to.

As I worked with the Homeless Services Program, I learned a lot about the providers who try to help the homeless. These people genuinely care about the people they serve, and are genuinely committed to improving the lives and opportunities of people who have become homeless. They are equally concerned about the causes of homelessness, and many would try to do something about the structural flaws in our society and economy that make homelessness so great a problem if they were not so busy merely trying to keep up with the numbers of people that need their services. Many providers are deeply worried about their fates under the "Contract With America" — Harriet Goldman, the director of HSP for almost fifteen years, said that this was "the most mean-spirited [period] I have ever seen." As both federal and state governments cut back on funding for homeless assistance, providers are worried about their ability to provide for the growing numbers of homeless people. They can only do so much with volunteers and private donations, but the welfare cuts and limits that are being heralded as "reform" are expected to push even more men and women onto the streets.

As I saw the commitment and compassion of providers, I encountered hostility among people who were more fortunate. Often all I had to say was that I worked for the Homeless Services Program and the seemingly rational person to whom I had been speaking would begin a tirade about how homeless people are all frauds who don't deserve even half of the help that is given them. Those who were the most hostile had never actually met someone who was homeless — their only encounters with homeless people were through sensation-seeking media reports about people who say that they like being homeless or that through welfare fraud they earn more than they would if they worked. What we have to remember is that for every person seen on the news who says he likes being homeless, for every person who

says she gets $15,000 a year in welfare benefits, there are dozens of people who are not homeless by choice, and who can barely scrape by on welfare checks. We must remember that if some drastic changes are not made in our society, our economy, our aid programs, and our attitudes toward the poor, more and more men, women, and children will experience life without a home.

Welfare programs need to be restructured so that recipients are not penalized for holding a job, and so they do not have to choose between working or receiving welfare. Perhaps some form of sliding benefits could be instituted that would enable people to receive income supplements up to a certain point. Child care needs to be provided for single parents so that they may work instead of caring for their children. Medicaid should not be cut off as soon as a recipient finds a job. Instead, some form of medical coverage should be made available to people who are working but do not receive medical coverage through their employers, and who earn too little to afford private health insurance. If there is a fear of welfare fraud resulting from cash benefits, then voucher systems should be made more flexible and less entrenched in bureaucracy, so that a person does not have to undergo three weeks' worth of paperwork and waiting in order to receive enough money to buy toothpaste. Perhaps future voucher-type programs could be modeled on Project Independence, Maryland's version of food stamps which uses a computer-scanned debit card. Affordable and public housing eliminated by gentrification or "urban renewal" plans must be replaced.

Many would-be welfare reformers have advocated the creation of a "workfare" system, where recipients must work or perform mandatory community service in exchange for benefits. While this would seem to solve the problem of pushing "lazy" recipients towards self-sufficiency, it is not a perfect solution. Not all jobs are created equal — even if working full-time, a person paid minimum wage needs an additional salary in order to provide for a family. If welfare recipients are made to work before they can receive benefits, their jobs and duties must have

meaningful wages and provide opportunities for advancement. Educational advancement should be considered the equivalent of job training programs and be an acceptable alternative to minimum-wage jobs under a workfare system. Job training programs need to provide people with professional skills which would qualify them for jobs that would enable them to be completely self-sufficient. However, mandatory service could easily transform welfare recipients into a vast pool of virtual slave labor, performing make-work or menial tasks in dead-end jobs for subsistence wages.

Ultimately, however, changes in the welfare system are not the final solution to homelessness — they are merely short-term provisions. In order to have any chance to eliminate homelessness completely, we must examine structural flaws in our socioeconomic system that make it so easy for people to fall through the cracks. We need to reconsider the value of the minimum wage and develop more jobs that would enable self-sufficiency. The wage discrepancy between men and women must be addressed. The quality of public education must be improved. People must also look at the reasons young women become single mothers, who are the fastest-growing demographic group of homeless people. More programs must be supported that work with poor girls, supplementing their education and offering them alternatives to sex and motherhood as means to self-esteem, as well as providing more information about contraceptives. We must also ask ourselves exactly what form of capitalism we want for our nation: if we want to temper it so that people are not reduced to living on sidewalks. If we want to remain the land of equality and opportunity, we must examine ourselves and our shortcomings in order to guarantee that all of our citizens can share equally in hope for the future.

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34 Emergency shelters are designed to be short-term housing. There is a time limit on how long a person may stay there, which ranges from anywhere between one week to two months. Transitional shelters are designed for longer-term stays, usually from six months to two years. These shelters are intended to help provide a homeless person a chance to find permanent housing.

35 Jamison-Hall, 21.

36 Bassuk, 345.

37 Liebow, 117.

38 "A job is the way out of homelessness." Liebow, 52.

39 Ibid., 53.

40 Ibid., 54.

41 Ibid., 52–54.

42 Jamison-Hall, 10.

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THE ART OF LIFTING STONES

BY LUKE OWENS

Lifting rocks in the forest marsh,
I smell the decrepit moss
And the life of the underneaths
Of things as the damp earth crumbles

Slightly. Insects flee the light and the new air
Like criminals under search-lights,
And the occasional slug
Moves slowly in methodical, sticky glory.

A thousand ants scurry from my eye,
Tugging their larvae like luggage
Over a ravaged countryside.
But they do not perceive me,
Only the feared, fragmented light.

ENGLISH AS THE NATIONAL LANGUAGE: RAMIFICATIONS IN SOCIAL, POLITICAL, AND EDUCATIONAL CIRCUITS

BY JENNIFER M. HAMMER

If English is adopted as the official national language of the United States, certain social, political, and educational issues will be affected and subjected to change. Issues such as voters' rights, multiculturalism in the classroom, bilingual education, and societal precepts will all be highlighted for scrutiny and revision. Such a decision may effectively cause the United States to regress to a time of national inequality, which will ultimately undermine the dictates of the Constitution.

Implementing English as the national language is a highly symbolic issue. English has been deemed "one of history's most energetic immigrants."[1] English has remained the dominant language in the United States throughout four centuries of immigration, and has enriched its lexicon by assimilating and borrowing words from a variety of other languages. "The language was happily spiced with words from [fifty] languages even before the opening of the New World."[2] This fact alone demonstrates the irony of the language debate: the American public is threatened by a national issue that has deep roots in international cultures. The French language provides us with knowledge of Greek and Latin words, and more recently Spanish terms have appeared in our conversations and literature as well.

Despite the fact that some politicians — namely Republican presidential candidate Bob Dole and U.S. House Speaker Newt Gingrich — favor mandating English as the national language; there are other public figures — both present and past — who disagree. The Founding Fathers of this country displayed pro-

found aversion to all things English after writing the Declaration of Independence: this aversion extended to the language as well.[3] Proposals were posited to adopt another language, but obviously English survived and has fortified itself instead. There are others who do not support making English the national language: "President Bill Clinton supports bilingual education 'to let these children live up to the fullest of their God-given capabilities... ' " and Texas Governor George Bush "left the state's popular bilingual programs untouched in his recent school reforms."[4] Nevertheless, according to recent polls, 73 percent of Americans believe that English should be the national language, and these citizens have Bob Dole, Newt Gingrich, and more than one-third of Congress supporting them. Dole declared that "We must stop the practice of multilingual education as a means of instilling ethnic pride or as a therapy for low self-esteem," but said that he "would not seek to ban the country's many bilingual education programs, provided they ensure people learn English in a timely fashion."[5] The question, then, is where to draw the line. These findings indicate that the issue is largely political in nature, yet intricately linked to larger educational and social issues as well.

Much of the attention revolving around the language issue has been heightened by the influx of legal and illegal immigrants flooding the United States with their foreign speech. Those in favor of English-only laws exhibit a form of prejudice against other peoples and cultures, and they shed negative light upon themselves as well. "Elevating English as an icon... has appeal for the insecure and the resentful. It provides a clear answer to the question: 'Who belongs?'"[6] Many people are concerned with maintaining their identities, ironically, while simultaneously deculturalizing other culture groups. Americans feel threatened by economic uncertainty caused by foreign competition, rising immigration, and political pressure to cater to the needs of immigrants.[7] While English is "the foremost language of science, diplomacy and international business... [and] is the native tongue of 350 million speakers and a second language for 350 million

more [speakers],"[8] "[i]n a global economy, it's the monolingual English speakers who are falling behind... Americans... are finding that a second language is useful in getting a good job."[9] How does a native speaker of English compete and survive in a business world voiced with a variety of languages?

From a legal standpoint, many problems are presenting themselves to judiciary systems throughout the country:

> The proposed English laws range from the barely noticeable to the almost xenophobic. A bill introduced by Missouri Republican Rep. Bill Emerson would mandate English for government use but provide exceptions for health, safety and civil and criminal justice... The most extreme official-English measures would pull the plug on what their sponsors consider linguistic welfare, ending bilingual education and bilingual ballots.[10]

Some critics assert that official-English measures violate Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Title VI bans discrimination against any human being based upon race, color, or national origin. If passed, English-only laws will give license to legal discrimination in the workplace and in other arenas. Already, "the proliferation of state and local English-only laws has led to a flurry of language-discrimination lawsuits and a record number of complaints with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission."[11] Nevertheless, there are courts that already endorse English-only laws, and ultimately all employees will suffer from a lack of justice. If the United States continues to endorse English-only legislation, it is surely only a matter of time before this country will be faced with more serious discrimination problems than those currently addressed.

Perhaps the most important legislation regarding official-English is Title VII of the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The 1965 ESEA "was part of a social policy in which schools were to be used as instruments to solve major social

problems."[12] Title VII of the ESEA ensures supplementary services for all non-English-speaking newcomers to America. If official-English is mandated, Title VII will be invalidated, and federal funding for English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) programs and bilingual education will be slashed to two-thirds of its present total. In 1974, the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Lau et al.* v. *Nichols et al.* "established the constitutional precedent for bilingual education... ."[13] The city of San Francisco had failed to provide special instruction for Chinese-speaking students and therefore provided unequal educational opportunities for these students. The San Francisco School District was charged with violating the Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution, and "[a]lthough the Court did not give a specific remedy to the situation, its ruling meant that all public school systems receiving any form of federal aid must ensure that children from non-English-speaking backgrounds be given some form of special help in learning standard English so that they may have equal educational opportunity." [14]

Bilingual education teaches students to be proficient in two languages, and

> [i]n theory, bilingual education is hard to fault. Students learn...content subjects in their native tongues, and they take English classes for a small part of the day... The crucial advantage is that students don't fall behind in their other lessons while gaining competence in English. When they are ready, ideally within three or four years, they switch to classes taught exclusively in English.[15]

There are several specific types of bilingual education, such as maintenance bilingual, transitional bilingual, and two-way bilingual education:

> Maintenance bilingual programs are designed to maintain the ability to speak, read, and write in the student's

> language, while at the same time learning English... In contrast, transitional bilingual does not have the goal of making the student literate in two languages. The student's native tongue is used in class until the student learns English. After the student learns English, classes are taught only in English. Two-way bilingual programs include both English and non-English speaking students. But conducting class in two languages, English-speaking students are able to learn the language of non-English speakers, while the non-English speakers learn English. The goal is for all students to become bilingual in English and another language.[16]

Needless to say, bilingual education is not without its faults. The program may do more harm than good in some cases. Students are sometimes assigned to bilingual programs due to their ethnicity: for example, Hispanic or Mexican students can be assigned to Spanish-English programs simply because their surnames "sound" Spanish. Javier Sanchez of Brooklyn, New York, is one such student. Javier Sanchez was moved to a bilingual program that taught classes in Spanish for all but thirty minutes a day. Javier did not understand Spanish, nor could he speak it. When he asked to return to his regular class, his teacher asked, "Why?... Don't you feel proud to be Hispanic?"[17]

An even larger, more expensive problem with bilingual education is the lack of well-trained teachers to work in bilingual education programs. "Nationwide, the shortage of teachers trained for bilingual-education programs is estimated at 170,000. The paucity of qualified candidates has forced desperate superintendents to waive some credentialing requirements and recruit instructors from abroad. The result is teachers who themselves struggle with English."[18] Without well-qualified teachers to assist bilingual students, the United States cannot offer its students equal educational opportunities. These students that are being taught by others like themselves are in jeopardy of getting locked within a language-gap. If left in that gap for too long, those

students will create their own niche, but will not assimilate into American language and culture. Consequently, these non-English-speaking students will suffer both academically and socially.

There are several linguistic and cultural differences that teachers of bilingual education and ESL programs should know and consider. A later ruling not covered by the *Lau* case, *Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School Children et al.* v. *Ann Arbor School District* applied to speakers of "Black English." The plaintiffs of the Court "argued that attempts to teach standard English without appreciating the dialect used by the children at home and in their community could cause the children to be ashamed of their language and hinder their ability to learn standard English."[19] Being reproved for speaking anything other than standard English presents a potentially shameful situation for some students:

> The first important fact about dialects that teachers should know is they do not indicate anything significant about a child's intelligence or cultural status... Home culture and mother tongue are a part of the child's very being, and teachers who criticize those elements are criticizing something fundamentally important to the child...It must be pointed out that formal study of explicit rules for language or dialect has little or no beneficial effect on performance.[7]

Therefore, it is essential for teachers to be ever-mindful of their students' strengths, despite their dialectical differences. "The home culture and the home dialect must be viewed as fundamental resources upon which to build."[21]

Research has been conducted on the consequences of bilingualism, and the findings confirm that "children who are bilingual have an advantage over monolingual children in several areas of cognitive functioning..."[22] One such area is metalinguistics —

> ... the ability to analyze forms of language and to use language in nonliteral ways. Metalinguistics plays an important role in emergent literacy. When learning to read and write, children need to learn about phoneme-grapheme correspondence (the relationship between sounds and letters). Metalinguistic awareness is required for children to attend to the sounds within words, rather than to their content or meaning. For example, children can understand that *bear* and *ball* begin with the same sound, or that *Jill* and *hill* rhyme.[23]

Another study conducted by professors from George Mason University will be released later this year. The researchers found that "children who had received six years of bilingual education in well-designed programs performed better than 70% of all 11th-graders, including native speakers, on standardized tests... [T]he highest achievers are products of two-way schools, where half the curriculum is taught in English, half in a foreign language."[24] Thus, there is conclusive proof that while bilingual education does indeed have many problems and there are many loopholes through which too many students slip, there are students who do benefit from the programs. The fact that in New York City classes are being taught in ten languages — "Spanish, Chinese, Haitian Creole, Russian, Korean, Arabic, Vietnamese, Polish, Bengali, and French," and that out of "43.6 million children attending public schools in America, 2.6 million don't speak English,"[25] speaks loudly to the American public, and explicates the necessity for continuing such programs.

The controversy surrounding establishing English as the official language of the United States will surely continue. So long as lobbying groups like U.S. English, founded in 1983 by U.S. Senator S.I. Hayakawa and currently headed by Mauro Mujica, continue to petition Congress and pester the public to pass the English-only laws, there will be conflicts at all levels of society. Education will be overhauled; elections will be influ-

enced, and social standings will be questioned. How can a non-English-speaking citizen vote on an English-only ballot? How can a non-English-speaking student immerse him- or herself in society if he or she cannot speak the language? How can people obtain drivers' licenses, or seek medical attention? These are questions which need to be seriously considered by all members of Congress, and by all voting Americans. This country is unique — we are supposed to be welcoming to and tolerant of all cultures. But if we deny anyone those rights and privileges as are outlined in our Constitution, we are defaming the very principles upon which this country was founded.

END NOTES

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2 Ibid., 48.

3 CHRONICLES, *Time* via Netscape, (18 Sept. 1995).

4 Margot Hornblower, et. al., "No Tolerance for Diversity,"*Time* via Netscape, (18 Sept. 1995).

5 Ibid.,1.

6 Susan Headden, et al., "One Nation, One Language," *U.S. News and World Report*, (25 Sept. 1995) 38.

7 Ibid., 38.

8 Parshall, *U.S. News and World Report*, 48.

9 Headden, *U.S. News and World Report*, 41.

10 Ibid., 40.

11 Ibid., 41.

12 Joel Spring, *American Education*. 6th ed., (New York: McGraw Hill, Inc., 1994), 213.

13 Hornblower,*Time*, 2.

14 Spring, *American Education*, 284.

15 Headden, *U.S. News and World Report*, 45.

16 Spring, *American Education*, 159–60.

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19 Spring, *American Education*, 284.

20 James D. Quisenberry, "Linguistic and cultural differences teachers should know," *Childhood Education* 70.2., (Winter 1993), 96-K.

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22 Kathryn H. Au, *Literacy Instruction in Multicultural Settings*. (Fort Worth, Texas: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College Publishers, 1993), 146.

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WHEN LOVERS DON'T

BY KELLI K. YOUNGBLOOD

Say: Put our worn clothes down; laundry
needs its rest. Let the dust continue to keep
the lampshade from feeling its naked slope.
And dinner—God, dinner! The stew can stew
until it's blue; tonight, dear, let me stir you, who
knows how soon I spoil and stale, like heated

milk. Listen: The neighbors are scratching out
checks and arguing that they have so little
to show, when a mirror or photo would do.
Try: Catching me when I've forgotten you
to the television or to the *Times*' crossword.
Catch my fingers to your lips, and I'll let the pen

fall with us. Promise: It's not just tonight we won't
make the mistakes lovers make when lovers don't.

GENDER ATTITUDES IN *THE LIFE OF CHRISTINA OF MARKYATE*

BY CORTNEY CLULOW

A new awareness of gender in this century has excited all sorts of inquiry into the nature of male and female identity. What are the roots of our present-day conception of male and female gender roles? Has sexism always existed? Historical research can help us answer these questions. Records were kept of families, economies, religious practices, cultural practices, relationships, and many other aspects of historical societies — in the same way we keep records today. Some of these ancient records have survived and are used as primary sources for researching the past. For example, if someone wants to know how gender impacted the life of religious women who lived in the early twelfth century, she can research the large collection of hagiographies, saints' biographies, surviving from that era. Hagiographies record the life experiences of religious men and women, typically focusing on the virtue of the saints as they struggle to overcome trials. Often, these trials result from conflicts between the saints' behavior and expected social practice. Because hagiographies record close interactions between individuals and their society, they are rich primary sources.

I became interested in how gender influenced the life of twelfth- century religious women, so I researched the hagiography of Saint Theodora, secularly known as Christina of Markyate. I was not able to work with the text in its original form, but used an English translation of the *The Life of Christina of Markyate*, by C. H. Talbot.[1] In his preface to the translation,

Talbot presents an approximate chronology of the most significant events in Christina's life, information for which I was very thankful, since the hagiography is not sequenced by the specific passage of time. It records Christina's life as a steady string of significant events; hence, it is difficult to determine the specific date of an event or the number of years that pass between events. I assume Talbot did some laborious research checking with other sources, in order to present his approximate chronology. He reports that Christina of Markyate was a noblewoman born at the close of the eleventh century in medieval Britain — a basic identification that is not clearly given in the *Life*. In the preface, Talbot also details existing evidence of the author's identity. He refutes theories ascribed to various specific authors and finally admits that the evidence is not conclusive. This is the only certainty that Talbot subscribes to: the first forty-odd years of Christina's life were recorded by an anonymous monk of St. Albans monastery with Christina's collaboration.[2] As a saint's life, the *Life of Christina of Markyate* served a didactic function in the twelfth century: her life was presented as an example for religious women to emulate. Certainly Talbot's research indicates the value of a gender-sensitive analysis of Christina's *Life*. As a tool for religious pedagogy, her *Life* provides a valid document of the gender attitudes at play in twelfth-century British society.

I have identified three attitudes toward gender in the *Life of Christina of Markyate*. These attitudes are not directly expressed in the text but are implicit. I will present the contextual evidence that substantiates them. They are revealed in Christina's relationships with others and her reactions to the circumstances imposed on her by society. I believe the following attitudes shaped her life:

1. Female sexuality and the female's physical body determine a woman's religious virtue,

2. Males, who are by nature bestial and require the influence of religion, need religious women to mediate between themselves and God, and
3. Saintly virtues are distinguished as either feminine or masculine.

I will spend the remainder of this essay using evidence from Christina's *Life* to illustrate these attitudes.

Christina's sexuality significantly influenced society's appraisal of her religious virtue. Throughout the text, the words "virgin" and "maiden" are frequently substituted for Christina's name. Other phrases, including "reverend handmaid of Christ" and "servant of the Lord Christ," that emphasize Christina's religious devotion, are used far less frequently.[3] By redefining Christina in terms of her virginity, emphasis is placed on her sexuality. To put this into perspective, I tried to remember how many times I have heard Jesus Christ referred to as a virgin in the Bible or in other religious texts. I could not think of any such instances; in fact, to refer to a man as a virgin in itself seems awkward. The connotation of virgin reserves the term for females. I conclude that Christina's virginity is a virtue because she is a woman; if she were a man, I don't think her virginity would have been given nearly as much attention.

Attempts to discredit her also indicate a preoccupation with Christina's sexuality. Over and over again, Christina is suspected and accused of sexual indulgence.[4] This slander contests her holiness. A quotation from Christina herself explains how sexual indulgence contradicts the virtue of a religious woman. She says to God, "Thou hast destroyed all them that go a-whoring from Thee."[5] This metaphor associates religious unfaithfulness with fornication; it insinuates that a faithful follower of God must be chaste. And, to extend this, if a women is "married" to God (I will quote a passage where Christina is referred to as Christ's "sorely tried spouse"[6]), and she is chaste, then she must also be

a physical virgin. Seen in this light, religious precepts prohibit women from sexual intercourse. Men, on the other hand, wouldn't be married to God since He is allegedly male. Even if they are committed to God in a metaphysical sense, I don't think non-virginal men would have the same sort of moral conflicts as non-virginal women. The emphasis on Christina's virginity and the preoccupation with her sexuality have led me to conclude that the appraisal of her religious virtue was gender-specific.

Christina's physical body also influenced society's appraisal of her religious virtue. While Christina had some control over her sexuality, she had no control over her biological sex. Nevertheless, society ascribed Christina virtue by merit of her sex. There is evidence in the text suggesting that female bodies are intrinsically holy. A woman's procreative anatomy has particularly strong religious associations in the *Life*. For example, a dove is said to have nestled in Christina's mother's lap and bosom before Christina's birth.[7] The dove is interpreted as the Holy Spirit by the author of the text — it indicates how the child "would be taught by the example and strengthened by the protection of Blessed Mary, ever a virgin, and be holy both in mind and body."[8] I noticed that the dove emphasizes the distinguishing features of the female body, the lap and bosom, and specifically denotes Mary as Christina's protector. Similarly, when Christina is commanded by her parents to serve drinks at a festival without her mantle, with her garments fastened at her sides, and her sleeves rolled up in order to encourage compliments about her body, it is written that she "fixed in her memory the thought of the Mother of God."[9] Both these examples indicate an association between the female body and the Virgin Mother, Mary.

There is another very curious passage in the text where Christina's body has holy significance. Christina's mother has called on a witch to incite her daughter's lust. She hopes that the witch's curse will drive Christina to consummate her marriage with Burthred, the husband Christina's mother and father have

chosen for their daughter. But at the height of this trial, Christ delivers Christina:

> For in the guise of a small child He came to the arms of his sorely tried spouse and remained with her a whole day, not only being felt but also seen. So the maiden took Him in her hands, gave thanks, and pressed Him to her bosom. And with immeasurable delight she held Him at one moment to her virginal breast, at another she felt His presence within her even through the barrier of her flesh.[10]

To me, this passage suggests the sublimation of Christina's sexual energies through virginal motherhood. Her physical body, specifically her breasts and uterus, is the means by which she receives Christ's succor. The association between women's bodies and the divine seems to hinge on motherhood particularly — not a physical motherhood, but a spiritual motherhood. This spiritual motherhood is personified by the Virgin Mary. It is particularly significant to notice that Mary is both impregnated by God and mother to him — and thereby she is the most holy of holy women.

The emphasis placed on Christina's physical beauty as well as the beauty of the Virgin Mary also suggests the divine nature of the female body. Because Christ had no human father, Caroline Walker Bynum, a medieval historian, suggests that he was believed to have been made exclusively of Mary's flesh.[11] In this sense, the beauty of Christ is derived from Mary — a woman. The very first sentence of Christina's *Life* reads: "In the town of Huntingdon there was born into a family of noble rank a maiden of uncommon holiness and beauty."[12] Very often, her holiness and beauty are presented hand in hand. The author of the *Life* remarks on Christina's beauty countless times; she is portrayed as exceptionally desirable. The irony of this virtue is quite pro-

nounced in the text. The conflict caused by Christina's sexual attractiveness and her dedication to holy living is at the heart of almost all her trials.

Like the association between holiness and the female body, the Virgin Mary epitomizes the association between holiness and beauty, as the following example illustrates. After escaping from her family, which is trying to force her to consummate her marriage to Burthred, Christina goes into hiding with an anonymous cleric. Unfortunately, this begets another trial: the devil drives the cleric mad with lust for Christina. In a dream sent to deliver her, the Virgin Mother appears. After giving Christina the strength to escape the cleric and guiding her into a "lofty and quiet" upper chamber where she sits "enjoying the beauty of the place," Mary comes and lays her head in Christina's lap with her face turned away from her (notice that this is another explicit association of Christina's sex and Mary).[13] When Christina begs to gaze on Mary's face, Mary turns it toward her, saying: "You may look now; and afterwards when I shall bring both you and Judith also into my chamber, you can gaze to your full content."[14] This quotation reminds me of biblical passages where someone is invited to gaze through the gates of paradise. Mary's face also contains all heavenly splendor and holiness. This idea is decisively reinforced when she remarks to Christina, "Why are you gazing upon me so intently? I am the greatest of women."[15] This is a direct equation of beauty and religious greatness. Christina is staring at Mary because she is so beautiful, perhaps the most beautiful woman. Apparently Mary is simply explaining to Christina how beauty and greatness correspond. I would paraphrase her response to Christina: "Of course I am beautiful, you shouldn't be amazed. After all, I'm the most holy of holy women." I believe these examples substantiate the correlation between women's beauty and religious greatness.

I conclude that women's sexuality and physical bodies were closely associated with their religious virtue. This entailed many conflicts and trials for religious women. In Christina's specific

case, the religious pressure for her to preserve her virginity and thereby her holiness ran counter to pressures from secular society for her to marry. This included pressure from her parents and from men of the church whom her parents had successfully bribed.[16] The church's preoccupation with female sexuality brought on society's fear and suspicion of women. Christina's vow of virginity was so precious that the archbishop Ralph of Canterbury declared he would have imposed the penance for manslaughter on Christina's mother if she had succeeded in deflowering her daughter.[17] Roger the hermit's initial, violent refusal to house Christina illustrates his suspicion and consequent aversion toward Christina's sexuality.[18] According to the research of historian Jane Tibbetts Schulenburg, even women who maintained their virginity and were faithful to religion were eschewed by monastic reformers. In her article "Women's Monastic Communities, 500–1100: Patterns of Expansion and Decline," she reports how a gender-based disparity in religious communities grew and how monastic communities for women dwindled as the Middle Ages came to an end.[19] This evidence indicates that Christina's society assigned women both virtue and stigma.

In the social context of male-female interaction, men were judged differently from Christina; in her *Life*, men are bestial by nature. The men whom Christina interacts with are often possessed by maddening lust. In Christina's dreams, her male pursuers take on the guises of horrible beasts: a wolf, a devil of horrible appearance with blackened teeth, bulls with threatening horns and glaring eyes, and an enormous wild, ugly, furry bear.[20] This sort of association in the *Life of Christina* bestializes men. It obscures their capacity to reason; men become creatures governed by their senses rather than by reason. I think that the social pressure for Burthred to "act the man," by engaging Christina in sexual intercourse precipitates his bestial nature.[21] The text describes him in a state of agitated fury, chasing her through the house like a devil. After she escapes from Burthred and her

family, she befriends an old recluse, Sueno, who becomes her mentor. In another illustration of male bestiality, an anonymous man tells Christina that Sueno "was still so stimulated by lust that unless he were prevented by the greater power of God he would without any shame lie with any ugly and mis-shapen leper."[22] It is significant that these examples attack Burthred and Sueno at a secular level. My interpretation of the anonymous man's accusation against Sueno led me to this premise: godly men do not act out of lust. The anonymous cleric whom the devil drives mad with passion, whom the devil incites to approach Christina without his clothes on and scandalize her, is both a religious and a worldly man. Unlike the cleric, Christina rejects the secular world completely and is able to resist the devil's incitements to pleasure.[23] This evidence from Christina's *Life* further substantiates the premise in her society that religion is a means by which secular, bestial men may tame their sensual passions.

The author of Christina's *Life* never suggests any contest between Christina's sensual and rational drives. In my reading, I was sure Christina did not even have a sex drive. She chooses the life of a recluse when the pressure for her to yield her virginity becomes threatening. At first, she tries to persuade Burthred of the virtue in chaste marriage, citing the lives of St. Cecilia and her husband Valerian.[24] She describes a life together where neither of them would touch the other unchastely but would each instead look upon the other with a pure and angelic gaze.[25] Later, she is forced to flee from her father's house in order to preserve her virginity, abandoning hopes for a chaste marriage with Burthred. Eventually, she goes into hiding in the cell and chapel of Roger the hermit.

Her life with Roger shares some of the qualities of the chaste marriage Christina describes to Burthred. Their first sight of each other is described:

> The fire, namely, which had been kindled by the spirit of God and burned in each one of them cast its sparks into their hearts by the grace of that mutual glance; and

> made one in heart and soul in chastity and charity in Christ, they were not afraid to dwell together under the same roof.[26]

At first, I thought this passage suggested a kind of sexual sublimation. But that would imply that sexual drives motivated the exchange described above. On second thought, it seems more like sexual sterilization than sublimation. Christina's neglect and abuse of her physical body while hiding at Roger's chapel resonates with this theory of desexualization and desensualization. In fear of discovery and scandal, Roger keeps Christina behind a panel for four years — the entire time she stays with him.[27] Her bowels dry up and she develops chronic illnesses from fasting and dehydration. Her body must have been in a wretched state; however, Christina's spirituality affords her much joy and satisfaction even as her sensuality is compromised. She and Roger form a spiritual union: "O how many tears of heavenly desire did they shed: on what rare delicacies of inward joy were they feasted!"[28] Christina's relationships with Roger and Burthred are both devoid of any sensual motivations; she is not repressing or sublimating her sexual drive. Unlike the men in her life, Christina does not seem to experience tension between her sensual and rational capacities — she is only rational.

Perhaps, through religious devotion, some of the men in the *Life* are as desensualized as Christina. After all, religion is the means through which she hones her spirituality and sterilizes her sexuality — such fanaticism was available to both women and men. However, I think it is especially interesting that none of the men experiences atrophy of his body as Christina does. The men continue to interact with society: they travel outside of their homes, communicate with church officials, and go on pilgrimages. Christina, on the other hand, becomes bedridden at a young age. I think this suggests her ethereality — her existence as a *primarily* spiritual rather than physical creature. Her relationship with the abbot Geoffrey illustrates the distinction between male and female spirituality. Geoffrey is her third mentor/protector,

following Sueno and Roger. The author explains how, during their spiritual union, Christina "was so imbued with the Holy Spirit that she neither knew nor wanted to like anything of this world."[29] In contrast, Geoffrey is tied to worldly affairs. The text depicts Christina as Geoffrey's spiritual guide while he is her material provider and protector.[30] She often intercedes on Geoffrey's behalf, praying and fasting for his sake. In a dream we see how she uses her spiritual motherhood to protect Geoffrey: she holds him to her breast and Christ comes to strengthen her hold.[31] A harmonious balance is achieved where Christina protects and redeems Geoffrey spiritually while he provides her a haven from her persecutors as well as the necessities of life. Their relationship represents distinct male and female gender roles: he is more worldly and provides for her material needs, while she is more ethereal and provides for his spiritual needs.

Christina's relationship with Christ combines elements of her life with Roger and Geoffrey. She refers to Christ as her spouse and yields her body up to him, much as she yielded her body to imprisonment by Roger.[32] She is protected by Christ, as she is protected by both Roger and Geoffrey.[33] However, Christ is not worldly; like Christina, his body is ethereal. I have already argued that, in the text, women's biological sex is inherently connected with Christ. I would now like to argue that religious women have a much stronger spiritual union with Christ than they could ever have with a human male. In fact, I think religious women have a direct link to Christ as both spouse and mother. When Christina holds Geoffrey to her breast in the example given previously, she is bringing him nearer to Christ — certainly she is bringing him into Christ's protection. I began this section with the premise that religion is the means by which secular men control their sensual passions. I believe Christina embodies this function — she is the link that connects both Roger and Geoffrey to religion. In this sense, she is religion. To sum up, the *Life of Christina* projects these gender roles in an ideal relationship: the female will relinquish control of her body to the male and the male will preserve her virginity, the female will use the holiness

of her body to bring the male closer to Christ and will thereby preserve the male's rational mind, and the male will provide for the female and protect her.

Finally, I will classify Christina's various virtues as feminine or masculine in order to reconstruct the gender attitudes held by her society. Before I deal with her virtues, I will identify a number of the derogatory expectations society had for Christina, by analyzing her temptations and trials. After all, it is Christina's refutation of these expectations that establishes her virtue. The temptations set on her by her parents and the devil seem to aim at feminine weakness. They try to tempt her with silk garments, ornaments, meats, singing, compliments, lewd conversation, and wine.[34] These temptations suggest women of her era were stereotyped as vain, comfort-loving revel-makers. Her trials may be analyzed the same way. Her mother beats her and pulls out her hair, then displays her publicly; her father strips her of all her property and clothes, save her shift, and attempts to throw her out of his house; and the devil sends demons in the guise of ugly toads and headless men to frighten her.[35] With regard to these trials, it seems that women take pride in their appearance, especially their clothing and hair, and that they fear being without personal property. A parenthetical note is given by the author after a description of other women's reaction to the headless man: "women are timid creatures."[36] We may assume that the author is representative of his era and that women were considered timid creatures by the masses. I think that these derogatory social prejudices stunted Christina's confidence. The author of the *Life* tells us how Christina worries over her own weakness.[37] Consequently, she often relies on Christ and the Virgin Mary to protect and aid her.[38]

Christina's virtues contrast with social expectations. Not only does she overcome the trials and temptations described above, but some of her virtues challenge gender distinctions. For example, Christina's triumphs are sometimes juxtaposed with a man's failure. Two such juxtapositions are Sueno's rejection of Christina's friendship after hearing rumors of her consummated

marriage while Christina remains steadfast upon hearing of his untamed lust, and the cleric's vulnerability to the devil's lustful incitement while Christina maintains control of her passion.[39] Some of her actions are noted for being traditionally restricted to men: namely, she rides a horse like a man to escape her family and she approaches the altar in a dream to prove her virginity when only men are permitted to approach the altar.[40] It is especially interesting that these masculine actions attribute strength to her — perhaps this indicates that strength could only be perceived in masculine terms.

Many of her virtues are also apparently feminine. According to the research of Donald Weinstein and Rudolph M. Bell, the supernatural abilities of saints can be classified according to gender.[41] For example, their findings report that small, private healings and visions are much more common for female saints than male saints. On the other hand, miraculous public healings are distinctively male. Christina is said to have supernaturally healed a woman and, by touching Christina's garments, other women are said to have been protected from demons.[42] It should be noted that these powers, as well as Christina's clairvoyance and visions, are essentially "private and passive" and, according to Weinstein and Bell's research, essentially feminine.[43] Her healing miracle, which had potential as a masculine miracle, is done with hesitation and without publicity. In this regard, Christina fits a feminine characterization. Her supernatural abilities do not transcend gender expectations.

The Life of Christina of Markyate details the life of a complex woman. Christina does not easily fit into a stereotypical gender role. However, her *Life* does give us insight into the function her era felt she should serve. I don't know if Christina is representative of most twelfth-century women — any conclusions drawn must be held skeptically and tried against myriad other contemporary sources. I conclude that Christina's sex significantly influenced her religious ambitions. I also know that she was not expected to defend her religious convictions alone, and that her

independent success would have been impossible in the society in which she lived. I am aware of the differing interactions between Christina and religious and secular men. Finally, I know that Christina's society had certain expectations for her, expectations to which she did not always conform. The ideals a particular society espouses are not necessarily what it approves of in practice.

My research brings to light the similar dichotomy of present-day gender attitudes. Like Christina, the modern woman is caught between ideals and realities. Our ideals exalt virginal marriage, but our society pressures the individual to engage in premarital sex. Women are expected to be sexually restrained, yet they are lauded for their sex appeal. Their financial dependence on men is the traditional ideal, but our economy demands women's participation in the work force and, necessarily, their financial independence. There are many other similarities to be found between the hypocritical attitudes represented in *The Life of Christina of Markyate* and our own lives. Christina's life was tortured by the impact of her society's attitudes — perhaps awareness of her reality can save our generation from similar suffering.

END NOTES

1 *The Life of Christina of Markyate*, ed. and trans. C. H. Talbot (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987 [12th c. AD]).

2 Ibid., 6-7.

3 Ibid., 153, 169

4 Ibid., 39, 49, 55, 95, 119, 153, 173.

5 Ibid., 41.

6 Ibid., 119.

7 Ibid., 35.

8 Ibid., 41

9 Ibid., 49.

10 Ibid., 119.

11 Caroline Walker Bynum, "Fast, Feast, and Flesh: the

Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women," in *Social History of Western Civilization, Vol. I: Readings from the Ancient World to the Seventeenth Century*, 2nd ed., ed. Richard M. Golden (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992),176.

12 *Life of Christina*, 35.

13 Ibid., 77.

14 Ibid., 35.

15 Ibid., 79.

16 Ibid., 47.

17 Ibid., 75, 85.

18 Ibid., 83, 103.

19 Jane Tibbetts Schulenburg, "Women's Monastic Communities, 500–1100: Patterns of Expansion and Decline," in *Sisters and Workers in the Middle Ages*, ed. Judith M. Bennett et al. (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1989), 238–9.

20 *Life of Christina*, 43, 54, 99, 117.

21 Ibid., 51, 53.

22 Ibid., 39.

23 Ibid., 115.

24 Ibid., 51.

25 Ibid.

26 Ibid., 103.

27 Ibid.

28 Ibid., 107.

29 Ibid., 139.

30 Ibid., 155.

31 Ibid., 169.

32 Ibid., 105, 133.

33 Ibid., 55, 69, 109

34 Ibid., 45, 49, 57.

35 Ibid., 73, 75, 99.

36 Ibid., 179.

37 Ibid., 93.

38 Ibid., 49, 55, 63, 77, 97, 109, 111.

39 Ibid., 55, 115.

40 Ibid., 93, 177.

41 Donald Weinstein and Rudolph M. Bell, *Saints & Society* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1982), 228-9.

42 *Life of Christina*, 121, 179.

43 *Saints & Society*, 228–9.

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CHESAPEAKE BAY, WEDNESDAY LAB

BY JENNIFER WALDYCH

Teach me mussels, oysters,
Clams. Burrowing clams,
Soft-shell clams: *Mya Arenaria*.
Sounded like a princess, a queen.

Mya, with liquid tresses, current swept.
Mya, with a sleek, perfect body. Wrapped
Around waves. *Mya Arenaria*:
Beautiful swimmer.

I dream of being a mermaid. I swim
Behind my parents' sailboat, tied
To a rope from the bow. I practice
How to dip and curve in their wake.

Our class on this white boat
On this brown water, drifted
Under the bridge. Three of us
Hauled in the otter trawl. A huge
Net full of bay: white perch,
Hog chokers, eels, striped bass, catfish.

My brother and I fish off the side
And catch catfish with hot-dogs.
They wriggle in my brother's hands
Before I give them back to you.

The ropes coiled on deck, nets
Stashed below, fish wriggled
From our hands, we talked clams.
The bi-valve mollusk lecture

Continued over the motor noise. Talk
About your foot, your mantle, siphon tubes.
Mya Arenaria called a piss clam,
While I searched the water.

Am I learning? Mya, am I learning?

THE VISITS

BY JENNIFER WALDYCH

In the dark planetarium a metal orb
Rises from the floor like a submarine
Raising a periscope. She leans in
All whispers, *That is the star.*

Yes, I have heard of my grandfather
Escaping Germany by star,
A ragged wise man. It is too far
For me to think of. She tells me.

I hold her paper hands
In my lap. A quilt of constellations
Turns above us on the ceiling.
I know the Big Dipper

And the Little. She has mapped it all.
She is plotting: How far to the border?
To the ocean? With a new moon?
A new moon gives best light.

At the end of the hour, day restores.
The metal orb swallows back into the floor,
Holding its grey breath. I hail a cab.
She gives directions to return us,

Her to the corner chair of her Brownstone,
Me to the train station. I hate driving here.
I forget, get lost. *You should learn.*
She grips my arm to say this.

You should know where you are going.
I want to tell her that its alright. I go,
Tired and remembering stars, Pisces:
Two fish swimming in opposite directions.

"UNLETTERED AND UNLICENSED": THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF MEDICINE IN MEDIEVAL PARIS

BY ERIN KATHLEEN ROWE

In 1322, a young woman named Jacoba Felicie was brought before the faculty of the University of Paris and charged with illegally practicing medicine within the district of Paris and its suburbs. The university documents which reflect this case record both the charges against Jacoba and her arguments against the charges. In the space of a few pages, an entire struggle between the universities and the people is embodied. The conflict was an old one, slow to develop and relatively quiet. When the conflict began, most medicine was practiced by healers and apothecaries and when it was over, physicians with degrees from universities monopolized medieval health care. Both the charges against Jacoba and her arguments exemplify the situation that existed in fourteenth century Paris and it raises many questions. For example: Why were healers denied the ability to practice medicine? How did these ancient craft healers fight back against the physicians? How did the conflict affect medieval women, both their lives and their health care? By taking the primary source document about Jacoba piece by piece from the beginning, one can begin to understand the conflict and its impact on medieval society, the future of medicine, and the role of women in medicine.

Before beginning a discussion concerning Jacoba and her relation to the university, it is necessary to provide a framework for the struggle which was taking place in the early fourteenth-century. A major change had occurred in medical practice after the collapse of Rome, when the theoretical aspects of medicine

became relatively obsolete, along with much of the other literature and scholarly work of the Romans and Greeks. The collapse of the more scholarly types of medicine left the "craft" healers — particularly midwives — with a virtual monopoly on medical practices throughout the early medieval period, although medical education was often taught in monasteries.[1] Slowly in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, medical education shifted from monasteries and cathedral schools to urban centers, which developed into the university system. Salerno, for example, was famed for its medical school, although at the beginning it was teaching the healing arts which constituted the majority of medieval health care. It was only later that Salerno's focus shifted to more theoretical and scholarly work concerning medicine.[2] In fact, twelfth-century Salerno boasted the medical expertise of a female practitioner named Tortula who most likely produced a series of writings covering medical advice and remedies.[3]

Around the time Tortula was publishing her treatises on medical advice, emphasis on university study was on the rise. By the mid-thirteenth century, a prospective doctor needed to obtain a Master of Arts from a university in order to proceed onto a degree in medicine.[4] This fact naturally excluded, all women who were not allowed to study at any of the new universities like the ones created in Oxford, England, or Paris, France. At this time, there was still an incredibly varied quantity of people practicing medicine in various forms, from apothecaries to trained physicians. Slowly, regulations were instituted in order to control who could practice medicine and who couldn't. Part of the reasoning behind this action was the desire to shape medicine from what was considered a "craft" into a science.[5] Thus, in the space of a few centuries, the education of physicians and regulations controlling who could practice medicine had begun to try to exclude more traditional forms of healing.

At the beginning of the document concerning Jacoba's case before the University of Paris, the charges are laid clearly against her. It is stated that she visited and examined the sick "in the manner of physicians and doctors," and that she prescribed

certain medicines, giving the patients "syrups to drink, pain relievers, laxatives and digestives, both liquid and nonliquid..."[6] By both visiting patients and giving them medications, Jacoba broke not only one law, but two. She broke two regulations specifically stated in the 1271 law which restricted the legal capabilities of herbalists and apothecaries. The law stated that herbalists and apothecaries could only mix drugs and sell them, but could not advise patients or administer the drugs themselves, both of which Jacoba did.[7] Based on the evidence that Jacoba visited patients and gave them drugs, the faculty decided that she was acting as a medical practitioner and the text adds: "although she has not been approved in any official school in Paris or elsewhere... ."[8] By doing so, Jacoba broke the 1220 law which gave exclusive rights to the faculty of the University of Paris to practice medicine in Paris and its suburbs. Those caught breaking the law were fined and threatened with excommunication.[9] Not only that, but Jacoba had already been warned in some fashion which is not entirely clear by the official of Paris.[10] She still persisted on practicing medicine, resisting the authority of the university system over the medical field.

The hearing records repeat the fact that Jacoba was licensed by no one to heal or give drugs. Naturally she did not have a degree, for she was not permitted to pursue one. The charges brought against Jacoba highlight the struggle between university authorities and the traditional healers perfectly because the emphasis is placed on the fact that Jacoba practiced in defiance of the law and her specific actions to break the laws (i.e., examining patients and giving them drugs). Nowhere in the text do the authorities accuse her of malpractice in any form. None of the witnesses brought against her accuse her of not being able to heal them, of harming them in some way, or of witchcraft in any form. In fact, one woman even states that "very many physicians had visited her in this illness," and were unable to help, whereas Jacoba was able to cure the woman and save her life.[11] Jacoba's

sole crime was the fact that she practiced medicine without a degree from the university.

Half of the document concerning the matter of Jacoba's case before the university faculty is a record of Jacoba's argument in her own defense. She structures her argument very logically; she is obviously an intelligent woman who has put a great deal of thought into her position as a medical practitioner. Her first point was to attack the 1220 and 1271 laws which the faculty accused her of breaking. She said that the laws were put into effect in order to protect the citizens of Paris and the suburbs from "idiots and fatuous ignorant ones, fools totally ignorant of the art of medicine... from whose number Jacoba is exempted, being experienced in the art of medicine and learned in the precepts of that art."[12] The trend to codify and regulate medical practices was often explained in terms of the desire to eradicate the problem of charlatans.[13] It is difficult to tell what constitutes a charlatan, although Jacoba's references to "idiots" and "fatuous ones" indicate that a charlatan may have been a person who did not know the arts of healing but practiced them anyway, most likely for financial gain. It is also extremely important that Jacoba claims that because she is not an idiot or charlatan, she believes the decrees against her "cannot be binding" to her.[14] By saying this, she is directly challenging the authority of the faculty. She believes that as a good practitioner herself, she is above the university decrees. Many members of the faculty probably found this statement by Jacoba a little alarming and perhaps dangerous to their position.

If one can trust the testimony of her witnesses, whom the reader is given no cause to doubt, then it seems as though Jacoba was indeed a successful healer. Her tactics for diagnosing medical conditions — checking the pulse and urine — were two very prominent techniques for attempting to diagnose a disease in medieval times. It was believed that different aspects of these two bodily functions, namely clarity, odor, color, and consistency on

the part of urine and strength and duration on the part of the pulse, could determine different problems the body was facing. For example, variations in urine were supposed to be able to indicate problems like headaches and fluxes.[15] In these tactics, then, Jacoba was following standard procedure.

Jacoba's next argument is that it is more proper for a woman to cure women of their diseases than to allow a male physician to touch a woman's body. Jacoba declares: "And it used to be that a woman allowed herself to die, rather than reveal her secret illnesses to a man…"[16] The argument of women's modesty is a clever one on the part of Jacoba. Although she is probably sincere in her fervor to protect the privacy of women, it is a potent argument because the society in which Jacoba and the faculty exist is one which was extremely concerned with women's chastity and modesty. She argues potently that: "…the laws say that lesser evils should be permitted, so that greater ones may be avoided [i.e., the deaths of people]."[17] Jacoba's commentary on this subject is also fraught with information concerning the gender norms of the time in which she lived. A woman, according to Jacoba, considered her modesty and privacy more important than her life; she would die of a painful and perhaps avoidable death rather than submit to permitting a physician to see or touch her body. It is unclear how much of this is Jacoba's rhetoric and how much is medieval reality, but it is likely that women indeed were terrified and horrified by the idea of showing themselves to male doctors. Women's health, particularly in gynecological matters, prior to this time had been handled by experienced women like midwives.

For all of the reasons expounded by Jacoba, the midwife was one of the most threatening figures to university-trained doctors. The preference on the part of society for women's medical care to be handled by other women would give women a virtual monopoly on certain aspects of women's medical treatment. The notion of female-controlled medical practice was completely at odds with the idea of a medical monopoly by university-trained

physicians. Jacoba's arrest was not an isolated incident in Paris. At the time of Jacoba's trial, there were two other women who were brought in front of the university faculty for breaking the laws concerning medical practice, Johanna Belota and Margaret of Ypres. Both women were highly respected surgeons, although they held no medical degrees from a university.[18] Historian Claudia Opitz believes that the educated doctors became jealous of the power and influence the midwives wielded and therefore attempted (and eventually succeeded), to drive them away from the field of medicine.[19] Although professional jealousies were most likely partially responsible for the difficulties which arose between doctors and healers, there were deeper forces at work in the dynamic between the two, which can be exemplified further in Jacoba's statement.

As carefully constructed as Jacoba's argumentation appears to be, in her last comments she reveals a certain tension with the university committee which she has not expressed clearly earlier in the text, although it is present in implications of her commentary on women. She remarks that her patients had asked what she refers to as "experienced masters in the art of medicine" to cure them but the efforts of the master failed and that she, Jacoba, was able to cure these same people.[20] On the surface, this remark may seem simply to be a brag about Jacoba's own medical skill or perhaps a little jab at the expense of the faculty. The comment is subtle, however, and expresses a tension which has been disguised earlier in Jacoba's comments. She is not hesitant in pointing out in a clear manner that she succeeds where doctors fail. In fact, all three of the female witnesses listed in the university records, Clemence de Belvaco, Joanna Bilbaut, and Joanna de Monciaco, made claims to the effect that skilled physicians had been handling their treatment and could not cure them and did not know what to do. Then Jacoba was called in to heal them and was successful, which was most likely a large embarrassment to the trained physicians who had failed. Embarrassment and Jacoba's challenge to the university authority aside, Jacoba's

commentary about her patients expresses a distrust in the trained medical field and a sense that those men, no matter how educated they might be, can't heal anyone. This distrust was much more of a threat to the institutionalization of medicine than anything Jacoba does or overtly declares.

The tension which exists in both the section on women and on Jacoba's superiority to physicians appears on both the side of the university and the side of Jacoba. Jacoba appears to be quietly letting the university faculty know that although they believe their knowledge and understanding of medicine to be the best and most effective, experience and practice often demonstrate otherwise. The university scholars, on the other hand, simply could not allow successful healers and apothecaries to cure where they had failed. Jacoba's comments may also imply a lack of faith in the work of physicians. The failure of the physicians immediately threatened the university's stranglehold over the medical field because the universities made a bid for supreme control over medicine. After receiving the exclusive right to practice medicine in Paris and its suburbs, they could not allow competition because any competition would be a direct threat to what had become the very nature of the university. The idea that the university was merely attempting to provide a public service for Parisians by applying higher medical standards and regulating charlatans, then, is turned on its ear. The university, as it developed, was not — and to some extent, could not be — interested only in who was practicing medicine in a safe way, but in who was practicing it their way. It could not be interested because the development of the university came to necessitate a monopoly which could brook no rivals, lest it lose everything in the struggle.

Jacoba, then, represents a danger to the university system. She is dangerous on many levels; not only does she flout the authority of the faculty by claiming to be exempt from their laws, she is more successful at her craft than many educated physicians. The university system constructed itself through time to have a monopoly on health care. Whether or not this construction

was based on a genuine desire for the increased health and prosperity of the citizens of Paris or a jealousy of the popular craft healers and apothecaries is not clear. The true answer lies probably somewhere precisely in the middle of the two. It is improbable that the universities planned to be in the situation that resulted by 1322 when the desire for a monopoly on medicine became a necessity. Either way, however, this is precisely the situation the universities found themselves in and they were faced with the need to stamp out their opposition, even if, like Jacoba, the opposition provided a good and important service to the people. Another result of the healer-university struggle was the systematic minimization of and attempt at eradication of women's positions as practitioners in the healthcare field. Women were squeezed into more and more marginalized positions, although they certainly did not disappear as midwives until much later, even though by the time midwives disappeared, midwifery had become somewhat dangerous. Jacoba's hearing expresses much about the changes in the medical field, how women figured into those changes, and how medicine has evolved the way it has.

END NOTES

1 David C. Lindberg, *The Beginning of Western Science* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1992), 317–19.

2 Ibid., 325–26.

3 Ibid., 329.

4 Edward Grant, *Physical Science in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 21.

5 Lindberg, *Western Science*, 327–30.

6 "University of Paris Records: The Case of a Woman Physician (1322)," in *Women's Lives In Medieval Europe: A Sourcebook*, ed. Emilie Amt (New York: Routledge, 1993), 108–9.

7 Pearl Kibre, *Scholarly Privileges in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, Mass.: Medieval Academy of America, 1962), 262–63.

8 "University of Paris Records," in *Women's Lives* , ed. Amt, 109.

9 Kibre, *Scholarly Privileges*, 262.

10 "University of Paris Records," in *Women's Lives* , ed. Amt, 109.

11 Ibid., 109–10.

12 Ibid., 111.

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14 "University of Paris Records," in *Women's Lives* , ed. Amt, 111.

15 Lindberg, *Western Science*, 335–39.

16 "University of Paris Records," in *Women's Lives* , ed. Amt, 111.

17 Ibid., 112.

18 Claudia Opitz, "Life in the Middle Ages," in *A History of Women: Silences of the Middle Ages*, ed. Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, trans. Deborah Lucas Schneider (Cambridge: The Belknap Press, 1992), 298.

19 Ibid., 299.

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AFFIRMATION / NERVES / UNTITLED

BY MICHELLE STRUNGE

We bring the day to a boil

[But he likes sharp edges
and they are after me
Like the way his smile slides
down those legs on the subway
Like the way his eye curls
around that waist in the elevator]

We bring the day to a boil
because I am not
a mass-transit girl.

IRISH CO_2 ABATEMENT STRATEGY

BY KEVIN ROLAND

Global cooperation is necessary to solve global problems. Be it in areas of military security or economic prosperity, cooperation provides the vehicle by which effective compromise can be reached, disaster averted, and interests furthered. One such issue that will test the ability of our nations to reach such compromise is the issue of climate change. In recognizing the greenhouse effect as truly a problem of global proportion, the United Nations has set out to establish a unity of purpose on all levels of international organization. However, it is at the national level where this purpose will be administered, and therefore any comprehensive strategy must be cognizant of the economic factors affecting its implementation. Without such flexibility, the reports on our earth's atmospheric health will continue to grow more foreboding.

The pace with which humankind has been able to recognize and quantify its own effect upon the planet's climate has steadily increased, hence the sense of need to rectify the problem. Some studies suggest that at the current rate, the amount of atmospheric CO_2 (the largest proportion of greenhouse gases), will double by the third quarter of the next century.[1] This increase could result in the rise of global surface temperatures between 1.5°C and 4.5°C. This would represent the warmest climate this planet has seen in six thousand years.

The implications of such a rise in global temperature would be widespread, yet particularly devastating to many of the world's developing countries. Many countries rely on marginal

agricultural land and irrigation to produce the food necessary to supply their expanding populations. These countries, many of which lie in the semiarid zones of the earth, would experience extreme scarcity of water, and thus food, contributing to the extension of poverty and famine. Industrialized economies will not be exempt from the effects of a drastic rise in the earth's temperature. Coastal flooding triggered by the melting of the Arctic ice shields could devastate the ports and centers of industry upon which the first world is so dependent. Such an occurrence would impose stifling economic and social costs. At one time these events seemed mere fantasy, but now the possibility of their occurrence, barring widespread intervention, looms large.

All countries are responsible for contributing to this increase in greenhouse gases. Through the burning of fossil fuels, deforestation, and industrial practices, all nations have helped to accelerate global warming. The very nature of greenhouse gas emissions makes the task of stemming the problem that much more difficult. As Tom Tietenberg states, the "damage caused by greenhouse gases is an externality in both space and time. Emitters impose costs not only to residents of other countries, but on subsequent generations as well."[2] Thus, since we cannot apply the exclusion principle to either benefits or externalities, we must recognize that the health of the atmosphere is a public good. Since the market cannot allocate resources to improve it due to problems of efficiency, sustainability, and free-riding*, the search for a solution must use a widespread, state-sponsored approach. One such approach is the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. This convention serves as a general framework under which nations can employ a cohesive, yet flexible approach to solving this problem.

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* Free-riding refers to a situation where people, firms, or countries avoid their responsibilities (e.g. underperform, underproduce, shirt, choat, etc.) in the hopes that others will shoulder the burden. [Ed.]

Ireland provides an interesting case study in how one nation addresses the problem of climate change and develops a strategy to combat it. As mentioned earlier, the free-rider problem makes a cohesive, unilateral policy necessary to reach a solution both effectively and efficiently. For that reason, the Irish government's CO_2 abatement strategy operates under not only the general U.N. framework, but under the European Union (EU) framework as well. Approved by the EU in December of 1993, and ratified in Ireland in April 1994, this strategy provides the uniformity needed for effectiveness, yet allows the flexibility needed for efficiency. For example, the EU commitment to the U.N. Convention pledges to stabilize CO_2 emissions in the community as a whole at their 1990 levels by the year 2000. However, the EU recognizes that the necessary economic growth in a number of its member states requires more realistic targets and measures in those states. While an economic powerhouse like Germany may be able to absorb the costs of adhering to the new regulations without severely hindering growth, the costs would stifle economic growth in the smaller nations such as Ireland. For that reason, the Irish policy target is to limit growth of CO_2 emissions to 20 percent over 1990 levels by the year 2000. This would allow a rise from 30,719 kilotons of CO_2 emitted in 1990 to 36,998 kilotons in the year 2000.[3] It is under this target that the national CO_2 abatement strategy has been developed.

The national strategy addresses five key areas that affect greenhouse gas emissions: energy, transportation, waste management, reforestation, and research. The energy sector is the largest source of CO_2 emissions and therefore the primary target of the national strategy. However, a number of structural factors inhibit Ireland's ability to reduce energy-based emissions, the first of which is the demand that a rapidly growing economy creates. According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) estimates, Ireland's economy grew at a rate of 6 percent in 1994, greatly outpacing its European counterparts.[4] The heaviest economic growth occurred in the energy-thirsty manufacturing sector, therefore

making the reduction of demand difficult. Another such factor is Ireland's reliance on peat, a carbon-intensive fuel source, for approximately 14 percent of its energy needs. Exacerbating the problem further is the already high use of natural gas, which leaves little room for expansion and the lack of a nuclear energy option. In order to overcome these structural inhibitors, a scheme employing both incentive-based and command and control approaches was viewed to be the most viable.

Incentive-based approaches are very effective for combating pollution in the energy sector, especially if they are targeted at reducing the demand for carbon-rich fuels and promote conservation of energy. One such approach the Irish government has taken is to significantly tax the use of carbon-rich fuels, thereby making their use a non–cost-effective option. This has led to the extensive overhaul and modernization of peat-fired power plants in order to obtain more economy and efficiency. An approach that has provided household consumers with the incentive to conserve energy is the government's program of interest relief for those families who make energy-efficient improvements to their homes. Creating further incentive to conserve, the Fuel Efficiency Survey Grant Scheme subsidizes businesses for the costs of conducting efficiency surveys.

While these approaches allow for households and businesses to employ the most efficient means of energy conservation, they alone are not sufficient in reaching the national policy goal of managing load growth to approximately 3 percent per year while still allowing for economic expansion. Command and Control (C&C) policies provide an effective means for the Irish government to honor its commitment under the EU framework. While in many cases C&C approaches have proven inefficient and ineffective, the peculiarities of the Irish economy allow for their effective use. For example, in the United States, the vast amount of energy producers throughout the country create a severe problem of information for the regulatory agency. Subsequent policies based on this incomplete or inadequate information generally yield inefficient and unenforceable regulation. In

addition, this "grasping in the dark" approach gives birth to mandates which in many cases create disincentives for firms to pursue more advanced pollution controls.

In the Irish example, however, these drawbacks of command and control are less evident. The primary reason for this is the absence of the information problem. While in the United States thousands of firms are involved in the supplying the nation with electricity, a single firm, the Electricity Supply Board (ESB), provides Ireland with its electricity needs. This allows for close cooperation between the government and the ESB in finding the most efficient means to achieve the regulatory standards. To aid in avoiding the other pitfalls of direct government regulation of industry, the government established the Irish Energy Center. The function of the center is to coordinate and implement the national energy conservation program while still maintaining a position independent of the government and acting in the interests of all parties, both producers and consumers. Apart from its role as regulatory agency, it is designed to serve as a development agency, providing aid for investments in R&D, technical advice, and public information campaigns. The government estimates that the Demand Side Management initiatives undertaken by the Irish Energy Center should limit CO_2 emissions by over a quarter of a million tons by the year 2000.

A specific C&C approach adopted by the government and administered by the Center are the new set of building regulations that intend to improve the energy efficiency of structures, thereby reducing demand. Currently, the energy required to operate buildings accounts for 45 percent of national energy use, with 80 percent of that coming from space heating. The implementation of the new insulation standards is expected to reduce CO_2 emissions from this source by 2 percent by the year 2000. Thus, the energy sector of the Irish economy provides an interesting example of how policy must be tailored to the characteristics peculiar to the subject.

The second area vital to Ireland's CO_2 abatement strategy is the transportation sector. Within this, the most crucial area of

CO_2 emissions is road transport. In many countries throughout the world, auto tailpipes have been labeled as one of the more notorious point sources of greenhouse gas emissions. In Ireland, they are responsible for over 75 percent of the emissions from the sector. To combat this problem, Ireland has again employed both incentive-based and C&C approaches. When dealing with a problem such as auto emissions, where the majority of demand is not created by necessity, incentive-based approaches work extremely well. Understanding this, the government has created a tax scheme whose aim, aside from creating revenue, is to curb the impact of road transport upon the atmosphere. This scheme provides specific measures that create significant fiscal incentives for the consumer to reduce emissions. One of these is the graduated road tax relative to engine size. Citing the decreased efficiency of larger engines, the tax ranges from IR £92 ($140) for cars up to 1,000 cc to IR £800 ($1,280) per year for cars greater than 3,000 cc. The Vehicle Registration Tax for new cars is 25.75 percent for cars not exceeding 2012 cc, while the tax for those whose engines displace more than 2,012 cc is 31.8 percent. These taxes are in addition to an across the board VAT (value-added tax) of 21 percent. Citing the increased efficiency and fuel economy of diesel engines over a given journey, the level of excise duty on diesel oil is significantly less than on gasoline in order to encourage its use.

Another incentive to increase efficiency and reduce emissions is an incentive plan designed to get the older, less efficient cars off the road. Understanding that Ireland's auto fleet is the oldest in the EU, and therefore produces a marginally higher level of emissions, consumers are offered a substantial credit to trade in their older cars for newer, more efficient models. In conjunction with the incentive-based approaches, the government is also enlisting new emissions standards to include the previously untested light goods vehicles and private cars. In order to handle the probable shift in demand from private transport to public transport, major investments will be made under the National Development Plan, the Operational Program

on Transport, and the Dublin Transport Initiative to bolster such services.

While the decay of waste produces negligible amounts of CO_2 relative to the other sources previously cited, waste management is still an important aspect of the broader strategy. What it lacks in production of CO_2, decaying waste more than makes up for with the emission of methane(CH_4). Methane itself is a target for abatement due to its role as a greenhouse gas, but the ways in which it may be disposed of are important to the Irish strategy. The availability of methane, and the ability to capture it, provides for a cleaner burning, sustainable alternative fuel source. This in turn would reduce the demand placed on other fossil fuels such as peat and coal for energy consumption. This incidence of "fuel switching" could prove rather important in reducing future CO_2 emissions. Two local authorities in Ireland, the Fingal County Council and the Cork Corporation, are currently examining the potential of recovering methane from landfills and sewage treatment sites and using it as fuel. The growing scarcity of fossil fuels, in addition to emissions concerns, will continue to expedite the search for alternative, cleaner fuels such as methane.

Reducing the production of CO_2 and other greenhouse gases at the source is an integral part of any abatement strategy. However, absorbing those emissions that reach the atmosphere is extremely important as well. For this reason, Ireland has undertaken an extensive program of reforestation. Deeming the program "CO_2 Sequestering by Biomass," the Irish government anticipates the great potential that this method of abatement holds. During the photosynthetic process, plants "fixate" CO_2 in their biomass, thereby removing it from the atmosphere. The use of green plants and CO_2 "sinks", or traps, provides a very cost-effective and sustainable aid in fighting emissions. The relative cost of reforestation is extremely low since Mother Nature took care of the R & D costs and the planting of trees does not require large capital expenditures. The process is also sustainable because of the life span and reliability of this "technology."

Reforestation holds tremendous potential due to the room for growth of its implementation. Ireland is the least forested nation within the EU, having only about 7 percent of its land surface — 475,000 hectares — covered. The national strategy set a goal to double the annual rate of planting from 15,000 hectares in 1988 to 30,000 hectares in 1993. Efficiency of planting is important in developing this program as well. The majority of trees being planted are conifers, which have been shown to absorb more carbon than the deciduous varieties. The government states that the forest currently absorbs 1.4 Metric Tous of Carbon (MTC) per year and after the planned extension of planting it should absorb 2.2 MTC by the year 2000. The subsequent growth in absorption will provide a substantial counterbalance to expected emission increases, thereby heightening the marginal effect of the reduction programs in the energy and transportation sectors. High levels of expenditure should continue in this area, due to its other social and economic benefits, throughout the rest of the decade. Over IR £220 million ($352m) was slated for investment from 1988–1993, with EU contributions of IR £90 million ($135m).

All pollution control strategies require extensive amounts of information and analysis to be effective. The scope of the problem of global warming requires a concerted and coordinated effort among all parties if any progress is to be made. At the global, regional, and national level, Ireland is participating and investing in extensive R & D programs. Under the auspices of the United Nations, Ireland is a member of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and contributes scientists to the International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme on Global Change. Within the EU framework, Ireland is a supporter, both technically and financially, of the community's energy related programs (JOULE and THERMIE). At a national level, government expenditures more than doubled from IR £1.4 million ($2.24 m) in 1989 to IR £3.7 million ($5.92 m) in 1990. The increased expenditures placed on research underlines the increasing ur-

gency of the world community to understand and stem the global warming problem.

The quality of the earth's atmosphere is a public good to the largest degree possible. Every person on this planet, regardless of geographic location, occupation, or station in life will in some way be affected by this problem. However, the economic urgency of abating this problem is hard to judge due to the amount of time between cause and effect. It is therefore hard for the market to allocate resources over time to reflect future implications. In addition, this problem involves many hidden costs, with these costs not being borne uniformly. This creates an incentive for many countries to free-ride the system and not shoulder their share of the burden. These factors create a scenario that will prove a formidable challenge to the often fragile ties that bind our global community.

The communication under the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change provides at this time a good framework from which the problem can be effectively addressed. By employing incentive-based principles at the global level, the United Nations has allowed its member states to allocate resources in the most efficient manner while still maintaining a cohesive stance. In some cases, such as the Irish energy sector, some command and control practices prove to be most efficient. The most important consideration is, however, that this conclusion is reached through individual analysis and not general mandate. Especially among the international and regional governing bodies, incentive and mutual benefit are the only forces that maintain unity. Only through unity of purpose will future generations enjoy the legacy of today's actions.

END NOTES

1 Tom Tietenberg, *Environmental Economics and Policy* (New York: Harper Collins, 1994), 266.

2 Tietenberg, 266.

3 Republic of Ireland, Dept. of the Environment, *Ireland Climate Change: CO_2 Abatement Strategy* (Dublin: Stationery Office, 1993) Note — unless otherwise noted, all subsequent statistics have been obtained from this source.

4 Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, *OECD Economic Surveys , Ireland, 1995* (Paris: OECD, 1995), 9.

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EXERCISING THE POWER TO STOP

BY RYAN WALKER

Driving the long black wedge
Of road into a cornfield, I expect
The meeting place I see up ahead—
A center point among hundreds
Of rows of young stalks — until you

Shift to neutral, press the brake, causing
The engine to relax, and the yellow dashes
That have been slipping under the car
To slow, then stop. Nothing meets

Here: Not the crickets in the stalks,
Not the circling birds.

BECKETT AND NARCISSUS: THE DESTRUCTION OF THE SELF THROUGH THE COMPLETE ABSORPTION OF THE SELF

BY ERIN KATHLEEN ROWE

Two of Samuel Beckett's major works, *Murphy*, a novel, and *Eleuthéria*, a play, grapple with questions pertaining to consciousness and existence. The main characters, Murphy and Victor Krap respectively, attempt to "unlock and inhabit" their minds. Their experimentation with mental liberation gives birth to some fascinating results. There is a myth which helps to explore Beckett's relationship to solitude, self, and introspection as portrayed in these two works in a clear and profound manner. The myth is that of Narcissus, one of the most striking among the entire body of Greek mythology. A beautiful young man falls in love with his image in a pool of water and gazes at that image until he dies. While perhaps on the surface the myth seems to pertain to vanity, the significance of Narcissus's story is much more profound. He is a man who becomes so obsessed with his self that he ends up destroying it. The myth provides a haunting lesson about the dangers of withdrawing too deeply into the confines of one's own self — or, in the critic Kibbard's terms, one's own mind. Beckett, too, understands that the line between introspection and destructive self-absorption is thin. Beckett's understanding of this line and the complete self-absorption found in Murphy and Victor create a fascinating tension within the works, both of which will be examined at some length.

The case of Victor Krap from the play *Eleuthéria* will be examined first. In the first act of the play, Victor's family is presented, but Victor himself does not fully enter the stage until

the second act. His family, particularly his mother, are almost desperate in their desire to remove Victor from the "hole" that he lives in and reconcile him with the family in some way which is not stated explicitly.[1] It is obvious that the family does not understand Victor in the least and the audience is given no real coherent explanation as to what Victor is doing (or not doing) that is driving the family so frantic. In the second act, more characters arrive on stage who want to know why Victor is doing what he is doing. It is clear to the audience now that what Victor is "doing" is absolutely nothing. He lies in his bed silently most of the day and tries to avoid his family. The characters finally resort to the threat of violence to force Victor to explain himself. First, Victor explains that he has no interest in living as everybody else lives. He has no sense than anyone is living a "better" life than anyone else; in fact, he says, "it's always the same drudgery, at every rung of the ladder."[2] It is obvious from this statement that Victor is not concerned with life or its meaning; he is absorbed in something else entirely.

Victor wants to be free, completely free, freer than any of the other characters can possibly imagine. "First I was a prisoner of others," he explains, "So I left them. Then I was the prisoner of self. That was worse. So I left myself."[3] When asked how he managed to escape his self, Victor tells them that he does not think, dream, listen, perceive, know, or want. By doing this, he creates a state which is as close to death as humanly possible, because, as he says: "That's where freedom lies: seeing oneself dead."[4] The distinction between seeing oneself dead and actual death is important here; death is not a favorable condition because when one dies, one loses consciousness. Victor tries to create a state of utter consciousness where there is no self. This idea is strangely reminiscent of the Zen Buddhist principle of the "mind of no mind," but with the ironic twist of being egocentric instead of egoless. It is probable that Victor would have rejected flatly the idea of the Buddhist method of losing the self because Buddhism encourages simultaneous attainment of (or attempts to attain), enlightenment. Enlightenment, for Victor, would be

another prison because it necessitates the movement of *attaining*, and desiring anything is an action where Victor demands total stillness. Victor often defines his state of consciousness in terms of what he does not do (i.e., he does not think, he does not dream, etc.), and this use of the negative implies that he is not transcending the ego, but negating himself, perhaps thinking that if everything about the self is a prison, it is necessary to *not be* anything.

A later scene in the third act helps to explicate Victor's strange lifestyle. Victor talks to the Glazier who wakes him from dreaming. Victor describes the dream: He is on a diving board and his father is below him in the water, encouraging him to jump down, but there are rocks and Victor is afraid, despite his father's promises to protect him. "I was afraid to get hurt," Victor says. "I was afraid of the rocks. I was afraid of drowning."[5] The metaphor Beckett uses here is obvious — Victor is afraid to "jump" outside of himself, afraid of the world. It is unclear whether or not Victor actually does eventually jump into the water, although the Glazier suggests that he does. The audience is hardly surprised, however, when Victor re-changes his mind and continues his silent, fetal life in his solitary room at the end of the play. The metaphor of the diving board is a nice subversion on Beckett's part of Victor's own philosophical stance. Victor says he wants to be free; in his dedication he is almost admirable. In the scene about the dream, Beckett later hints that perhaps it is not bravery, but rather fear, which is keeping Victor where he is. Perhaps afraid is the major thing Victor tries to *not be* — to not be afraid may equal freedom in his mind.

Regardless of precisely why Victor remains in the fetal position in his room, he still represents a character who is wholly consumed with himself and who fails. The circular motion of the text — i.e., the fact that Victor resumes the same position in the bed at the end of the play — indicates that the same scenes presented in the play may reoccur. Victor will never be left alone; thus, he will never be free. The attainment of freedom for Victor is impossible because of the methods by which he attempts to achieve it. Perhaps Victor believes that if he sits very, very

quietly, like Narcissus staring into the pool, and if the water is completely flat, he can somehow become the still, empty image staring at him. Peter Zweig, who has studied the impact of the myth of Narcissus on Western culture, claims that in order to achieve any sort of higher or more fully developed state of consciousness by self-reflection, one needs to balance perfectly action and introspection. Without that crucial balance, Narcissus will be unable to see past his life into the other, reflected self. Zweig writes: "As long as the life and the word have not succeeded in embracing one another, the water will be riddled by *cent folies*, until it resembles a 'bottomless void,' a deformed and crippled selfhood."[6] The "life" and the "word" here represent action and introspection, deed and thought. Victor attempts to still the water by stilling himself in order to see that true reflection in the water, but he is unfocused, barred perhaps by fear, unable to allow the life and the word to intermingle, imprisoned by his total absorption in himself.

Another Beckettian character who finds it completely impossible to allow the life and the word to intermingle is Murphy. In many ways, Murphy is the virtual embodiment of the Cartesian mind-body split. He ties himself to a rocking chair in order to subdue his body; "then it set him free in his mind. For it was not until his body was appeased that he could come alive in his mind..."[7] Murphy's dual longing for and shrinking from his girlfriend Celia has already been mentioned. Despite the fact that Murphy is described as being "split in two," there are *three* sections of Murphy's mind the way he envisions it: a light third; a half light half dark third; and the dark third. The light section is the section involved with physical sensation, the half light contemplation which requires effort, and the dark section of "will-lessness" in which he finds himself becoming more and more absorbed.[8] Murphy's attitude toward life, similar to that of Victor's, is best described by a passage from Descartes: "I will now close my eyes, I will plug my ears, I will turn aside all of my senses... in this way concerned only with myself looking only at what is inside me, I will try, little by little, to know myself and to

become more familiar with myself."[9] The crucial difference between Murphy and Descartes in this passage, however, is that Murphy does not seem to want to know himself better. Murphy, like Victor, longs to be lost in a sea of a freedom, a formless and effortless world where there is no intrusion from the outside world. Murphy is Narcissus by the pool, lost in his own mind, drowning in his consciousness.

Zweig believes that introspection to the point of utter self-absorption leads to a loss of certainty of one's place in the world and a terror of being ridiculous. Thus, Narcissus must withdraw from the world, as Murphy and Victor do, and denigrate their bodies, as Murphy rejects the physical desires of his. Zweig states: "Schizophrenia is the malady of isolation."[10] Too much introspection, then, leads to a distortion of and inability to deal with reality in any sense. The irony of Zweig's statement as it applies to Murphy, of course, is that Murphy not only would have agreed with it, but embraced it. As the novel tells the reader, Murphy's experience "as a physical and rational being obliged him to call sanctuary what the psychiatrics called exile."[11] Murphy's obsession with the insane leads him to Mercyseat Mental Hospital where he begins a job looking after the patients. Murphy believes that the lives of the insane are content because they live totally within the confines of their minds with no ties to the outside world.

The patient Murphy admires the most is Mr. Endon. In describing Murphy's relationship to Endon and Endon's illness, Beckett himself invokes the image of Narcissus: "In short, [Mr. Endon's was] a psychosis so limpid and imperturbable that Murphy felt drawn to it as Narcissus to his fountain."[12] Murphy is obviously Narcissus, drowning in his desire for Mr. Endon's special attention and his longing to be crazy. When he realizes that he will never be "seen" by Mr. Endon, Murphy returns to his garret and dies in what is most likely a suicidal act, although the text is not completely clear on the subject. In other words, Murphy is Narcissus at the moment when Narcissus realizes that he can never be joined with the image he so adores in the water,

and either stabs himself to death or starves to death, depending on the version of the myth.

Murphy and Victor both ultimately fail in their desire to create a life of total self-absorption. Their quest was doomed from the beginning because of the very nature of their intentions. By attempting to rid themselves of the physical half of their existence, Murphy and Victor were strangling part of their selves. It is not possible to completely amputate a portion of one's self and yet still be a whole self. Simultaneously, both men set up an ideal in their minds of what bliss is, which Murphy can attain for short periods of time when tied to a rocking chair or can see reflected in the eyes of the insane, and Victor can attain when he is alone in his room, unmoving and unthinking. As Zweig writes: "Narcissus, gazing into the water, is engaged in a painful vigil, the image he looks for escapes him. The more he looks, the more he is filled with the sense of a painful lack."[13] This image is strongly connected to the one invoked in the end of the last paragraph, but here it works in reference to Murphy and Victor and their relationship to themselves. Here, Murphy and Victor as Narcissus can see the ideal of what they want to become; a reflection is the perfect symbol for the reality behind Murphy's and Victor's ideal self of total freedom. A reflection cannot see, hear, feel, taste, desire, or hate, which is certainly representative of the reality longed for by both Victor and Murphy. A reflection is also ephemeral, blurry, two-dimensional and elusive. Victor can lie in his room all day and try not to think or dream or move, but his family — as well as other intruders — will never stop interrupting his solitude to attempt to understand him. Murphy cannot become insane, and any other manifestation of his ideal is imperfect. Victor never seems to realize his failure; failure for Murphy leads to his death, which essentially represents his surrender in the struggle for obtaining total freedom.

It would be natural to assume that Beckett, as the author and invisible presence in these two works, would be largely sympathetic to struggle and failure of his characters. While undoubtedly feeling a strong connection to Victor and Murphy, Beckett

nevertheless critiques their actions in an interesting manner. This critique is visible in the discussion of Victor's fear of drowning. The critique in Murphy is clearer and stronger and can be demonstrated in one scene concerning Murphy's attitudes about the insane. His attitude toward the asylum patients is extremely idealistic. He thinks of the insane as living idyllic, happy lives and Beckett comments wryly: "The frequent expressions apparently of pain, rage, despair [by the patients]...suggesting a fly somewhere in the ointment of Microcosmos, Murphy either disregarded or muted to mean what he wanted."[14] In this commentary, Beckett points out that Murphy distorts his ideal in order to find a living example of it and suggests that even had Murphy become insane, he would not have found that existence to be what he expected it to be. Part of the problem seems to lie in the very fact that Murphy is trying to *attain* something, which is a direct contradiction to the formless freedom he thinks he would like to cultivate.

Beckett himself, then, does not seem to be writing these works in order to construct an image of the ideal life. His function in the texts seems to be to explore how one can explore one's consciousness, both seriously and with a great deal of humor. Beckett's irony is an integral part of both texts and he subtly ridicules the ambitions of Victor and Murphy, making his attitude toward his protagonists ambiguous. In the majority of his works, Beckett displays a fascination with exploring the different methods one can use to cope with life. Although Beckett investigates these methods through the medium of his characters, he also distances himself from them by critiquing their actions. Zweig writes:

> We have chosen to describe men whose character and genius led them close to the danger point of silence, yet not beyond it... Between the hero and the madman there is this difference: the hero carries not only his own solitude but the solitude of his countrymen as well... The madman, one might say, is a hero who has

> lost his way; the hero, a madman who can and will still speak to us.[15]

If one looks at this passage carefully in relation to Beckett, Victor, and Murphy, one can clearly see that Murphy and Victor represent the "madmen" whereas Beckett himself is the "hero." It is important to make the distinction between "madman" as Zweig uses it and the insane people Murphy so admires. A madman here is simply a "hero who has lost his way," not a schizophrenic who has absolutely no ability to function in society in any form. That understood, the parallel becomes more clear. Murphy and Victor wander into the danger point of silence and lose all connection to their "countrymen" (i.e., everyone else in their world). Beckett, on the other hand, travels to the danger point by using Murphy and Victor and is able to communicate that journey back to his countrymen in the form of literature. Victor and Murphy, seen in the proper light, are the characters Beckett uses in order to communicate the journeys of himself as the hero.

Beckett stands outside these two works as the hero communicating information back into the world of humans, molding the stories of Victor and Murphy so they happen to align themselves closely with the myth of Narcissus. Many of Beckett's works seem to project an attitude of hopelessness and futility, as in the famous line from *Waiting for Godot*: "Rien à faire" (nothing to be done). Despite the reoccurrence of this theme and the failures of Murphy and Victor, Beckett continued writing, leading one to wonder why he felt the need to communicate his discoveries back to others. The only reply can be found in a comment made by Beckett: "I couldn't have done it otherwise. Gone on, I mean. I could not have gone through the awful wretched mess of life without having left a stain upon the silence."[16] With that comment, Beckett reinforces his status as a Zweigian hero — he ventured to the silence and returned to leave a "stain" for everyone else to see. Murphy and Victor remain behind for the rest of us, eternally peering downward into the unruffled pools of their consciousness.

END NOTES

1 Samuel Beckett, *Eleuthéria*, trans. Michael Brodsky (New York: Grove Press Inc., 1995), 55–7.

2 Ibid., 161.

3 Ibid., 163.

4 Ibid., 165–66.

5 Ibid., 172.

6 Peter Zweig, *The Heresy of Self-Love: A Study of Subversive Individualism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 178.

7 Beckett, *Murphy* (New York: Grove Press Inc., 1957), 2.

8 Ibid., 113.

9 As quoted by Zweig, *The Heresy of Self-Love*, 121.

10 Zweig, *The Heresy of Self-Love*, 260.

11 Beckett, *Murphy*, 177–78.

12 Ibid., 186.

13 Zweig, *The Heresy of Self-Love*, 179.

14 Beckett, *Murphy*, 179.

15 Zweig, *The Heresy of Self-Love*, 256–57.

16 As quoted in Deirdre Bair, *Samuel Beckett* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1978), 640.

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MULTI-CULTURE:
A WORD FROM THE PUBLISHER

A "liberal arts education" has been Washington College's way of being "multi-cultural" if what we mean by that latter phrase is a diversity of cultures, especially intellectual cultures. In this sense Washington College has been in the "multi-cultures" business for over two hundred years. And our accomplishment—as well as the longevity of our culture—shows in student magazines like this year's issue of the *Washington College Review*.

Once again, it is not the Creative Writing—for which the college is noted—that dominates our all-campus magazine, but solid writing from a number of our other disciplines. And once again, credit goes to the faculty who helped these students shape and edit their writing so that it was fit for publication. In such collaborative ways does our culture multiply.

What we learn by publishing the *Washington College Review* is what we teach here at Washington College: That a liberal arts education is a kind of *E Pluribus Unum* of states of knowledge. Taken together our fields of study have a richness born of natural diversity. Our students learn this when they write and publish their work. We are proud of their accomplishments — and of the liberal arts culture in which they work.

Robert Day
Publisher

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